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ABSTRACT

This is a report of a conference concerned with educating "less-able" 16-19 year old students within the British school system. These students vary from being physically handicapped, to educationally "sub-normal," to simply lacking in vocational skills. Topics of papers presented include: defining disadvantaged young people, describing academic and vocational resources available to them in the system, curriculum development, and counselling services. Two basic themes recur in most of the papers. First, the root of the problem of educating the "less able" is the emphasis the educational system places upon the high achiever. This is manifested through allocation of resources. More resources should be devoted to the underachiever. It is also suggested that schools should focus far less on examination success as an educational goal. Second, appropriate education for this student population should include better preparation for future life experiences. Otherwise, these young people will soon be parents and workers, unskilled at both occupations unless they are better prepared before leaving school. It is noted that 16 year old girls were found to be the most educationally deprived of all students. It is recommended that these students be encouraged to remain in school. (Author/GC)

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Vol 7 No 10

Coombe Lodge Report

Study Conference 74/28

Schools and Colleges 16–19
The Education of the Less Able Student

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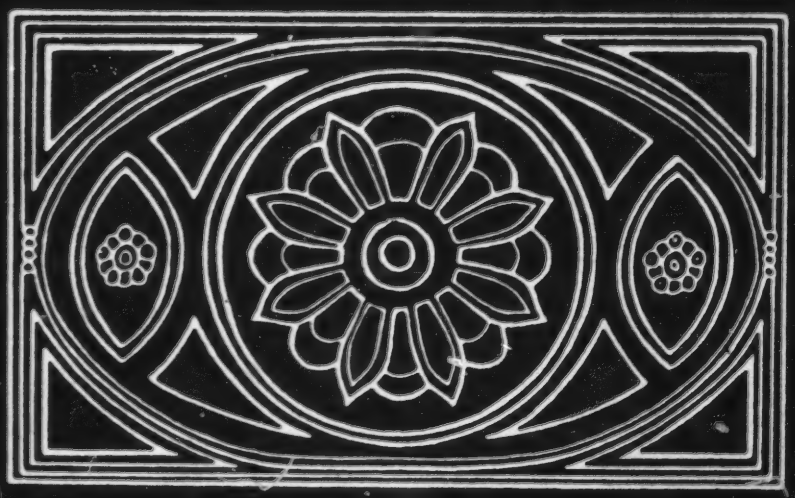

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SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES 16-19 : THE EDUCATION OF THE LESS ABLE STUDENT

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Study Conference 74/28

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FOREWORD

Of the points raised over the conference week, the following were constant and explicit themes:-

The root of the problem of educating the less-able was the emphasis that the education system itself placed on the high achiever and his or her higher education. This emphasis, as expressed through allocation of resources, should be altered to greater concentration on the under-achiever. This, necessarily, has implications for Burnham and the balance of graded posts within institutions. Both schools and colleges should minimise their - almost exclusive - concentration on examination successes.

Secondly, the appropriate education for the 16-19 less-able students should be much more of a preparation for life. While this was as true for the high as the low-achievers, the cycle of deprivation could be broken at this period in life as the system was then dealing with the parents of the next generation. Further, the education service should positively counter-act the tendency of the vast majority of girls leaving at 16: very likely, they were the most deprived group of all.

N.B. This Report was edited by Miss Kathryn Burrows.

A Weedall,
Principal, Bournville
College of Further
Education

SERVING THE NEEDS OF YOUNG PEOPLE

lack of provision for the less-able

"In the local authority areas in which I have worked - Warrington, Herefordshire, Wigan, the Heavy Woollen area of West Riding, Grimsby and Cleethorpes and Birmingham - the thing that has struck me most often is the great disparity between the provision for the more able and that provided for the youngster who leaves school at the earliest possible moment. If one thinks of the provision of Common Rooms, Sports facilities and so on in our universities and other institutions for higher education, and then what their peers who left school at 15 enjoy - or, rather, do not enjoy - I feel that perhaps we get what we ask for in terms of violence and vandalism. One doesn't actually have to sit in the Juvenile Court for long, or serve on the Case Committees of the Probation Service, to realise that the vast majority of those with whom these institutions will be dealing will come from the groups who have had least help from the social and educational services until they have come to the attention of the police. Then we start to pump in resources, but even then the overworked Probation Officers, dealing with 40 'cases' as well as preparing Social Enquiry Reports and attending Court can do no more that scratch at the surface of the problem. Even at this stage the provision is grossly inadequate. Neither do we provide the residential facilities of the type and scale that we really need to deal effectively with these young people.

In February of this year Dr. Briault of ILEA addressed the AGM of the ACHFE. He pointed out that, of the 172,000 residents in his area between 15 and 19, 46,000 were in FE and another 14,000 in schools - thus, only about 30% are receiving any form of education after the age of 15. If anything, the Inner London position will be a little better than most other areas because of the numbers who work but do not live in Inner London and use its part-time education provision, and because of the large number of students in the concentration of higher education centres in Inner London.

This week, when you are discussing the needs of these 16-19 year olds, try to keep in mind how relatively little we know of the educational needs of the less able or how we can meet them. Before looking at some of the needs of all in this age group I should like to briefly describe an arithmetic course I took, some 12 years ago, with 15-16 year old factory girls. I decided to base it on planning the furnishing of one's first house, and we started by discussing what we felt were the bare essentials of a newly married young couple. By visiting shops and comparing prices the girls prepared an acceptable list which, at that time, came to between £300 and £400. We then discussed wages and how we spent them, then the question of saving - what proportion of our income we gave at home for our keep, how this varied with the girl who was already living in furnished accommodation and what methods could be used to save, particularly pointing out the effect of subsidised interest rates as negotiated between certain large firms and

the local Municipal Bank. From this we got on to how long we needed to save and what the 'going steady' and engagement period should be. All good solid material in a Day Continuation College where you could talk realistically about stoppages from pay, what Mum expected, and whether the girl paid for her boy-friend if he was a student or earned less than the girl who was on piece rate. The girls didn't want arithmetic. They needed a bit of basic economics - (the choice between the use of scarce resources) - some consumer education, some law (to understand the complexities of hire-purchase) and some psychology (how to get the boy-friend to accept the need for long-term planning without bringing their relationship to breaking point).

That was a fairly straightforward case, dealing with the needs of girls who were all interested in the practical problems involved in setting up a home. Let us look now at the needs of adolescents today. They probably face more problems than any previous teenage generation - usually with very little real help. In "Human Developments and Education" Havighurst outlines the tasks that have to be undertaken by individuals living in modern society. He refers to 'developmental tasks' which he interprets as those which arise at or about a certain period in the life of an individual, successful achievement of which leads to happiness and success in later life, while failure leads to personal unhappiness, social disapproval and increased difficulty in coping.

developmental tasks

Mr Round, Principal Lecturer in the Youth, Community Service and Social Work Department of Jordanhill College, saw that Havighurst has listed 10 'developmental tasks' which occur in the adolescent stage (some prior to 16 but all are relevant to the age group we are studying). These 'tasks' are:-

1 achieving new and more mature relationships with age mates of both sexes;
2 achieving a masculine or feminine social role;
3 accepting one's physique and using one's body effectively;
4 achieving emotional independence of parents and other adults;
5 achieving assurance of economic independence;
6 selecting and preparing for an occupation;
7 preparing for marriage and family life;
8 developing the skills and concepts necessary for civic competence;
9 desiring and achieving socially responsible behaviour; and
10 acquiring a set of values and an ethical system as a guide to behaviour.

On the matter of achieving emotional independence our difficulty is that, if we retain more and more young people in the full-time educational system then they are less likely to be able to achieve that emotional independence and more likely to achieve frustration and animosity. I wonder whether we have not to come round to a system of mandatory allowances. Neil Kinnock, M. P., for Bedwelty, speaking to the Institute of Careers Officers, said that the enormous disparity in our treatment of young people must be removed. This disparity is financial - the university student has £3,700 more devoted to his education than does the 16 year old leaver - and includes the gap in status and opportunity. He suggested that all young people under 21 should, after the statutory school leaving age, have a guaranteed legally enforcable minimum income which would continue until the end of higher education. Could not the TOPS scheme be used more effectively for the purpose of enabling young people to continue their

education, treating them as employable at 16 and under training for industry, whether in full-time or part-time education?

With regard to... 'achieving assurance of economic independence'... I should like to challenge the Education Ministers of the last 10 years with a question "Why was the recommendation of the Crowther Committee to raise the school leaving age to 16, before developing compulsory part-time day release, accepted without full examination of the reasons for its advocacy?" I understand from members of the Committee that one of the principal factors was the lack of successful day release schemes for the average and less-than-average in operation. I believe this to be a negative view, and that if the challenge had been given, it could have been accepted successfully. I think that we should have very quickly secured a voluntary staying-on figure of about 70-80% of the 16 year olds and would have been able to take some of the pressure from our colleagues in the schools.

On the sixth 'task' - selecting and preparing for an occupation - the schools, colleges and careers officers need to work very closely with industry. We in Birmingham have started a West Midland Schools-Industry Link Scheme and now have 65 firms and 71 schools taking part. I believe that part-time education would also enable appropriate follow-up procedures to be adopted. In FE colleges we cannot put th into operation because the young people come to us at the expense of their employers. With compulsory day release this strait jacket would be removed.

education for adult responsibilities

However, it is in the area of the last 4 'developmental tasks' that we in education have failed lamentably. I may be committing educational hari-kari but, in my opinion, the emphasis on pre-school education is premature. I would think it far more advisable to educate the Mums and Dads of the future in the preparation for marriage and its responsibilities. We have to break the circle of deprivation somewhere and, from our experience at Bournville, I would break it by a form of education for 16-18 year old girls that we have been providing for some years. Our first year was devoted to acclimatising the girl to her new working and educational environment. We taught English as a means of both communication and of broadening outlook, and included Committee Procedure, since the student life of the college was organised through a series of day committees which were responsible for communicating student views and for organising activities. We included a very wide range of physical activities such as swimming, netball, badminton, table-tennis, tennis, mime, trampolining, dancing, gymnastics and keep-fit. The girls took first aid and home nursing, musical appreciation, social studies, arts and crafts, dressmaking and the study of materials and soft furnishings and cookery - here we concentrated on a balanced diet and quickly prepared meals, recognising that most factory, shop and office workers would continue in employment for some time after marriage. We included woodwork, particularly toy and furniture making, dealing also with design, non-toxic paints, etc. and, in addition, household maintenance (including paper hanging, elementary glazing, simple plumbing, electrical repairs and a study of central heating systems in smaller houses). We discussed personal relationships related to starting work - the changes in attitude in one's own family when one becomes a wage-earner - the relationships with foremen, forewomen and one's workmates and, for example, the stratification of

society and the changed relationships that are potentially disconcerting as one moved upward from member of a packing team, say, to check-weighing, to over-seer and forewoman.

The final term in the college was devoted to the practical running of a small house that we had. Here the girls would help with repairs and maintenance, entertain visitors (usually old people) from the neighbouring houses, look after the garden, prepare meals and, in available spare time, carry out some useful piece of craft work such as rug-making, embroidery, lamp-shade making or art. The afternoon sessions worked on a four-fold plan:-

1 to ensure that the girls knew all about home-buying or renting and furniture purchase;

2 to ensure that they knew as much as possible of the emotional problems of married life, and understood some of the adjustments necessary in their own and their future husbands thinking in the first few months of married life;

3 to help them understand something about the bringing-up of children and the sources of help available. At this stage they visited ante- and pre-natal clinics, nursery schools and play centres, and they were told of such organisations as the Marriage Guidance Association, churches and their ministers, the probation service, etc. They also met the parents of handicapped children and saw something of the work being done with such children.

4 We recognised that girls in their early years of marriage can be extremely lonely, confined so often to their own homes. We discussed the importance of the mother's role in the home, and introduced them to such organisations as the Townswomens' Guild, Women's Institutes, Young Wives Clubs and Co-operative Guilds. We also put before them the opportunities for Adult Education and the value of such facilities in broadening their outlooks and enriching their own experience.

I am aware of two reservations about this kind of approach. First, that this is done in schools. Well, much of it is today, but it is important that these topics are dealt with when the girls are working, when they are, and can be seen to be, relevant. Second, that this programme keeps women tied to the kitchen sink. Nothing could be further from the truth. I believe passionately that women should get the chance to fulfil themselves in a much wider range of careers and that the proportion of women in higher education should be much higher. Side by side with the kind of approach I have outlined above I want to see more educational opportunities for women. Having said that, I believe that we act irresponsibly towards the girls if we give them only an education suitable to the family breadwinner, and we deceive ourselves in ignoring that, at present, being a wife and mother is what the girls want for themselves.

To return to the other 'developmental tasks'... that of developing the skills and concepts necessary for civic competence should go beyond the inclusion of civics, citizenship, government and politics or British Constitution in our teaching programmes. The skills can only be developed by practice, under controlled conditions.

'Desiring and achieving socially responsible behaviour' is really helping young

people to exercise self-discipline. This is nct easy, particularly when the lack of this quality is so marked in our society. This must start much earlier than adolescence, but it is vital that it be developed throughout. I am sure that discussicn groups considering, first, whether this is a need for young people and, secondly, how to go about it, will be extremely lively.

Havinghurst's last point 'acquiring a set of values and an ethical system as a guide to behaviour' is, again, particularly difficult in our multi-religious and multi-value society: it is, too, the area which gives me most cause for concern. I doubt whether we could get unanimity in many staff rooms on how best to educate towards 'this developmental task'. However, as educators we must attempt it.

Objectives for educational institutions

Any educational institution dealing with young people must have its objectives, but these must be revised in the light of changes in society - for the college, in employment. We are living in a time when the demands for labour are shifting quite remarkably. In 1950, for example, the numbers of male workers in the mining and agricultural industries were 840,000 and 709,000 respectively: in 1970 these had fallen to 408,000 and 301,000, a fall of over 50% of the tctal labour force. The figures for entrants to employment are even more dramatic. According to figures published 2 weeks ago, the number of craft apprentices recruited in engineering was 27,687 in 1968/9, dropping to 14,940 in 1972/3. Allowing for young people trained on full-time EITB courses, about 2,000, the fall is almost 40% over 5 years. Of course, against this fall we have to put the almost insatiable demand in certain areas of the country for people for the service industries and for recruitment through adult retraining schemes. These figures illustrate why I believe that we do not want too early specialisation: rather, we need to lay the broadest possible educational basis upon which short spells of retraining at a later stage become much more easy to structure. These figures illustrate, too, why we should review our objectives at regular intervals.

In 1960, when I went to Bournville, we had about 2,000 15-18 year olds, the vast majority being in semi-skilled or unskilled jobs and following a general, ncn-examinatcn course. I defined my objectives then as follows:-

1. to ensure that every young person coming to the college was helped to decide on his or her most suitable course;
2. to provide clearly-defined steps for advancement in examination courses;
3. to provide clearly-defined courses for non-examination students at various levels of ability;
4. to introduce some system of incentive which would be acceptable to both students and employers - in practice, we devised a College Certificate system whereby we converted various examination successes (O & A levels, RSA passes, St. John's Ambulance, etc.) into College Awards;
5. to build up, if at all possible, the corporate life of the college so that the ideal set forth in 'Youth's Opportunity' - of a County College being the focal point for youth work in the area - was as nearly attained as possible.

I have had to change my objectives on a number of occasions, as for instance, when I had to submit to pressure to move from day release to block release

which lost continuity and inhibited the designing of the course to meet individual needs. Another occasion was when I had to move to examination courses for the less-able because of pressure from an ITB. Fortunately, I was able to get the City & Guilds of London Institute to agree to modify the pattern of the 150 Series* of Operatives courses to safeguard the general education content which my staff felt desirable, and to devise objective tests for young factory workers which went well below the CSE level. These courses have had a tremendous effect on motivation, and I believe that they are capable of development for the vast majority of the less-able.

I think that, today, we would re-define our aims, and I would put them as:-

1 to ensure that every student coming into college clearly knows what his course is, what it demands of him, and that he has participated in choosing it;
2 that the students have the maximum support both in their college course and in their personal needs, from the college;
3 that students and staff have a sense of common purpose - to assist the student to attain the highest possible level and yet, at the same time, feel that he is in an understanding and caring community;
4 to help both students and staff to recognise that their own particular subject or interest, while valuable, is but a part of the <u>whole</u> life of a community. This is particularly important when there is a danger that staff taking 'A' levels will look on their colleagues doing non-examination work with the less-able and mentally handicapped, on occasions, as wasting resources and having an easy time.

The final set of objectives I would put before you are those of the first Headmaster of Bournville.....

1 "to continue the education of young people to an age when they will begin to realise the advantages and opportunities which are available;
2 to train them to take a greater interest in the affairs of the world in which they live, and to have a greater understanding of its requirements of them as individuals;
3 to encourage them to use their intelligence, and to develop self-reliance and adaptability; and
4 to try to influence them to use their leisure time in such a manner that their lives may be fuller and happier."

At the beginning of this week I think you could do worse than consider these 4 aims, formulated 60 years ago for young factory workers, and seek to find ways in which <u>all</u> young people, not just a selected few, can be helped by some section of the Education Service to feel that their time has been well-spent, whether in full or part-time study."

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* See the Bournville 150 Operatives Scheme Table.

Discussion arising

Questions and comments tended to concentrate around motivation - of the employers, the staff and the students. On motivating the local employers to give release to non-examination students Mr Weedall said that Bournville had moved away from completely non-vocational work to C & G 150 (which was really semi-vocational). City & Guilds had accepted the 60:60:90 balance (60 - relevant vocational education; 60 - general industrial background; 90 - general education of a non-examination character; both the 60 hours were examinable through objective testing).

On the motivation of the students, those who were already alienated by the education system, Mr Weedall said that since some firms had made day release optional, staff had been invited to talk to every new group of employees - and the college was now getting 75% - though, regretfully, a much lower percentage of girls - coming into the college voluntarily: he suspected that this was due to (at least) two factors; one, that the open evening for presentation of C & G Certificates had engendered much enthusiasm on the part of both students and their parents; and that the course content of the 150 Course had both interested the students and been within their capabilities, so that success - for some, their first, had stimulated even higher motivation.

Mr Weedall agreed that staff would have as their priorities the real - as opposed to the expressed priorities of the institution, as expressed in staff grading and allocation of college resources. He regretted that Burnham - as usually interpreted by college principals and LEAs - militated against low level and non-examination work, but thought that public opinion would pressurise colleges and schools to put this kind of work at a higher priority: indeed, this was already happening.

BOURNVILLE 150 OPERATIVES SCHEME

	hours per week
specific technology	3
the firm	3
industrial safety and first aid	3
industrial organisation	1½
industrial work projects	3
industrial communications and progress books	3
physical activities	3
earning and spending	3
craft option	6
home affairs	1½

options from:- home catering
dress and fashion
woodwork
household improvements
arts and crafts
motor vehicle maintenance

ORGANISATION OF INDUSTRY

2.1 purpose of industry

2.2 organisation of production - estimating demands, stimulating demand, adjustment of products to market needs; the need for market research

2.3 types of industrial organisation: (a) nationalised
(b) privately controlled - sole trader, partnership, private and public liability, companies

2.4 provision of finance for industry

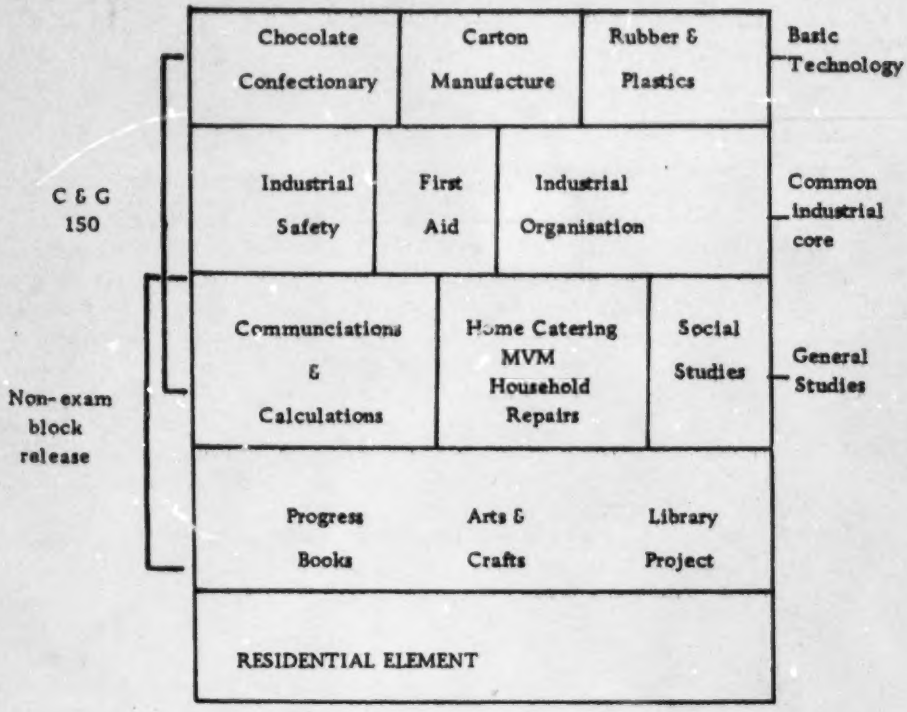
2.5 obtaining of raw materials; receiving, storing and issue to departments

2.6 flow of production: plant lay-out, movement of commodities by hand and machine

2.7 jobs necessary to modern industry: management, design, purchasing, production, warehousing, transport, accounting, secretaries, sales

2.8 personnel functions, including education, training and welfare services

PATTERN OF COURSE



R Gulliford,
Senior Lecturer in
Education, The
University of
Birmingham

'WHO ARE THE DISADVANTAGED?'

"While terminology is always a problem to educationalists, this is particularly true for those of us dealing with the children who are the least successful. 'Disadvantaged' is, perhaps, a rather euphemistic umbrella term for pupils and students who have special difficulties and who may also have experienced little academic success. Special educationalists would prefer to talk of 'children with special needs' rather than 'the handicapped'. There is an increasingly held view that it would be best to get rid of categories and just assess childrens individual needs. However, it is through a consideration of official categories that we can get some picture of the situation; to which we can add those problems not included in the "official" categories. We can also consider the limitations of these categories. Before embarking on the catalogue I ought also to mention that the figures - all for 1970 - refer only to those children in Special Schools: there are many others who attend the normal schools and require special educational and other forms of help.

blind

The present regulations cite 10 categories of handicapped young people. The blind are a fairly small group - about 1141. There are vocrtional assessment centres and further training establishments for "normal" blind children, but the Vernon Committee recommended residential centres to provide social training for blind young people with marked additional handicaps. Many of these are still in subnormality hospitals or adult training centres. Some blind children - eg. in Sheffield and Liverpool - are receiving "open" education, ie. in ordinary secondary schools, and it is probable that the impetus of the Vernon Report will lead to more of these children coming into open FE.

The partially sighted are those who can be educated by sighted methods, though they may need large print, many more visual aids and good illumination. There are 2204 in Special Schools, but there is reason to believe that there are many more who come into this group who are 'getting by' or neglected in ordinary schools. The National Children's Bureau* found that 57% of partially sighted in their survey sample are receiving further education of some kind. My colleagues rather doubt this figure and feel that the present provision for FE for these children is inadequate. Their visual handicap slows down their rate of learning so that they need longer period of education and they will benefit socially from opportunities for FE.

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* "The Handicapped School Leaver" - Tuckey, Parfitt & Tuckey. NCB Pub. NFER

deaf

The hearing for speech of the 3,817 deaf children is so poor that they need very careful teaching to acquire language skills. The 4,450 partially hearing children, however, have already sufficient speech to acquire speech and language by natural means supplemented by hearing aids. These are either in Special Schools or, increasingly, in ordinary schools with 'partially hearing' units. (There are, in addition, 15,000 children with hearing aids). The National Children's Bureau's Survey (NCB'S) found that only 34% of their sample were receiving training or further education. Since their educational attainment tends to be low, they have a great need for much more education and as their communication skills improve for more contact with people with ordinary hearing.

physically handicapped

There were 12,316 physically handicapped children in 1970 - and another 10,000 in ordinary schools. The NCB Survey discovered that, of the 56% receiving further education or training, only 13% went to colleges of FE. This figure is low when compared with other categories. The disabilities of these children are very varied and their needs are complex: as with the group above, there is a clear need for more education and more opportunities for mixing in and relating to the community.

'delicate'

The provision for the 7,797 children officially classed as 'delicate' used to be called open-air schools but, as the number of truly delicate children has been decreasing, places in these schools are increasingly taken up by those with learning or emotional disorders or those who are socially disadvantaged. Delicate children - especially those with respiratory conditions - are very likely to have missed a lot of school time and may, therefore, be educationally retarded as well.

There are 12,669 children receiving special education as 'malajusted' pupils. There is, of course, a much larger number of pupils with emotional and behaviour problems. While between 6 and 7% of the total group need special help, there is much evidence to indicate that the real figure is something higher than 7% and much higher in certain of our towns. The NCB Survey showed that 31% were in Special Schools and, of the relevant age group, 18% in FE. As with the other groups, the 'malajusted' are likely to have fallen behind with their school work, and I am sure that that they would benefit from the FE environment - especially when they come to decide about their future.

ESN

There are 58,012 'educationally sub-normal children, not counting those severely handicapped children who used to be in training centres. The NCB Survey showed that only 19% were receiving any education or training after 16, and only 2% were in FE colleges. These are people with a mean IQ of 65 - 70 who, almost invariably, suffer from disadvantages other than their limited ability. However, their low IQs don't mean that their abilities are totally limited: research into ESN children has shown that many more could cope satisfactorily with some FE courses if given adequate support.

The 806 epileptic children quoted are those in special schools for epileptic children - the ones who need the most special help. There are others in other kinds of special schools. We ought to remember that 0.8% of the population are affected in some degree by epilepsy. A large number of them are in

ordinary schools and, sometimes, the schools don't know about it. I will just say by way of commentary, that not nearly enough is known about the effects of this condition and its treatment on the learning of these children.

The NCB Survey didn't look at the last of the official categories, those with speech defects who have difficulty in receptive and expressive language. There are 286 children with severe speech and language disorders attending 3 Special Schools. There are about 12 other special classes but many people concerned with these children feel that there ought to be much more provision. Some of these speech disordered children are basically quite intelligent and will benefit from further education. A major consideration for you is however the fact that speech and language difficulties are common additional problems for many disadvantaged people.

ommissions

So much for the "official" categories of the handicapped: whom do they omit? The first, very obvious group, is the 14-20% of pupils who are the least successful in ordinary schools. At least 10% arrive at secondary school with a reading age below 8 years. We know that a lot of children still have difficulties in reading around ages 8 and 9. Though they get remedial help in schools, many continue to have difficulty in both reading and spelling. In 1968 the DES made a survey of 500 secondary schools and asked headteachers to say how many pupils needed special educational help. It was found that 14% needed such help not only, of course, with reading but in their general schoolwork. It is not an exaggeration to describe this as one of the unsolved problems of our education system. While the larger part of our secondary population is increasingly taking part in external examination courses, there is considerable uncertainty about the appropriate education for the least successful. Do they need a different curriculum with different aims and emphasis, or should they be introduced to the same curricula with different methods of teaching? Should they be in special or remedial classes, or taught in mixed-ability groups? A recent Report* was impressed by the number of Schools Council projects that could be used successfully with slow learners. It was suggested that many of the projects studied emphasized students personal involvement, study of the environment and community, oral discussion. It was considered possible to minimize the need for reading and writing skills. Another factor in the education of the least able is the need to train and to recruit staff to teach specifically in this area - and to ensure that the teachers of specialist subjects know how to teach those with low ability.

Another group we should bear in mind are pupils with specific learning disabilities such as dyslexia. This is a small but important group in that these children are often highly intelligent but, because their disability is not recognised, their potential is overlooked. Some, but not all, adult illiterates are certainly those who had specific difficulties needing specialized help.

Gulliford, R and Widlake, P. Teaching Materials for the Disadvantaged. Schools Council Curriculum Bulletin 5. (Evans/Methuen Educational, price £1. 25).

Finally, there are the socially and environmentally disadvantaged. A recent NCB publication described them as 'born to fail'; Clegg estimated that about 12% of pupils in his LEA could be described as 'children in distress'. The government has demonstrated awareness of this group in its designation of Educational Priority Areas. Most of these children are under-functioning in school; they often have low educational aspirations. Some are antipathetic towards official education. Yet many have quite good potentiality. The approach to the problem of social handicap needs social as well as educational measures starting in earliest infancy, continuing in pre-school and school. Further education has an important part to play.

qualifications

I should now like to make some qualifications about the categories of handicap I have mentioned. Firstly, most children don't fall into discreet categories. Some of the more pronounced special needs arise from multiple handicaps, eg. the physically handicapped child who is also ESN or malajusted or both. With the physically handicapped child, it can be the subnormality or the malajustment which is more important educationally-speaking than the physical handicap.

Secondly, the degree of disability is not a sure indicator of the degree of handicap. There is a distinction between the two. The extent to which a physical/sensory disability - or, for that matter, an environmental/social disadvantage - becomes a handicap depends on such factors as:-

(a) the child's personality and level of intelligence;
(b) the degree of home stability and parental support and encouragement;
(c) school experience - help and support from the school and staff
modification of buildings
expectations of others, and appropriate methods of learning
(d) the attitudes of the peer groups and adults in community.

What we try to do is to minimise the degree of handicap arising from the disability and this involves help to the individual as a person, as a member of a family and the community as well as educational help, the provision of aids and other adaptations to living.

Thirdly, the present level of educational or intellectual attainment or the degree of handicap is not a good predictor of future achievement. The IQ is a measure of present functioning. In general terms, there is a fairly good relation between IQ and subsequent performance, but this still leaves ample scope for the effects of more favourable conditions and higher motivation to tell. This point is particularly important in the case of children with marked disabilities. Many reach the end of the school careers with very poor educational attainment. This is hardly surprising since they will, most likely, have missed much school through attendance at therapy sessions, operations, and, moreover, may have had more limited social and environmental experiences. Very likely their personality, conceptual and emotional developments will also be retarded - some very backward pupils only just reach the thinking level of junior children at the age of 16. These are yet more justifications for carrying on education after that point.

Last in my list of qualifications, there is the effect of multiple handicaps. One reason why we are not happy with a simple categorisation of handicaps is that many pupils have additional disabilities. We have to be careful not to overlook these in our concern for the major disability.

FE & the disadvantaged

What needs of the disadvantaged can be met by FE? Firstly, it can provide the opportunity to continue education and to realise potential. Once special education was provided from 5 or 7 years of age to 15 years. Now we hear increasingly of pre-school education, FE and vocational assessment and training and also of adult education. Teachers have long realised that a proportion of their pupils were not ready for work by the time of statutory leaving age. Sometimes such pupils matured fairly rapidly in the immediate post-school years, but even so FE could have enriched and broadened that development; some failed in work and living (sometimes unexpectedly) and further education rather than the repeated experience of failure was needed.

Secondly, it can provide an opportunity for continued intellectual development. We used to be told that the graph of normal intellectual development levelled out in adolescence, and an even earlier cessation of growth for the mentally retarded. Now we have evidence that mental development continues if educational stimulation is available; we can continue to improve the mental functioning of even very backward students.

FE can also offer an evironment where interests, knowledge and skills relevant to leisure as well as work can be pursued. This could develop the person as well as the worker. Concomitant with this, FE could provide a social experience with other disadvantaged and, more importantly, normal adolescents. This would be a valuable transition experience for the handicapped. Further, it can offer counselling. All human beings and certainly all adolescents need some form of counselling at some time. The disadvantaged will have special problems: eg. the non-reader who fears that there is something wrong with his brain; eg. the handicapped adolescent who wants to love but is anxious about relationships with the opposite sex; eg. the student with low self-concepts and the one with unrealistic aspirations and expectations.

The NCB Survey of handicapped school leavers ended with two recommendations that would help the progress of handicapped school-leavers: that in every local authority there should be one person in the FE department to ensure that the handicapped are thoroughly informed of all the opportunities in FE that they could use; that there should be one person in Social Services department to supervise and co-ordinate further social care of the handicapped.

If I had to sum up the answer to the question "Who are the disadvantaged?" I would say that the term includes any young person whose potential has been impaired as a result of unfavourable environmental circumstances (at school as well as home) or whose personal disabilities really require a longer period of education or social care if they are to achieve either a minimum degree of social and personal competance or to reach more closely the levels of their potential.

If one sense, they are not people who need something special. They need, in current American jargon, the normalisation of experience. But at the same

time, they do require careful guidance, tutoring and a sensitivity to their reactions and needs. How these normal and special requirements can be combined is, presumably, the question before this conference. I often think that the young children now in Special Schools should be different, in 10 years time, from the adolescent individuals we now have in Schools and centres, and I feel that the work which is developing in Further Education for the disadvantaged and handicapped could have similarly far reaching results."

Discussion Arising

Mr Gulliford agreed that one of the problems was getting the whole profession interested in the 'less-able' rather than just isolated specialists, but mentioned the increasing interest of Post Graduate Certificate students in the disadvantaged. There were also signs that more comprehensive schools and some FE colleges were setting up and experimenting with different approaches to remedial work and offering more attractive allowances to attract suitable staff.

Mr Gulliford agreed that this work required more resources, but felt that the problem was not just one of shortage of resources but rather lack of organisation on behalf of the less successful. For example, junior school teachers often regarded the teaching of reading as the job of the infant school, even though children develop at different rates. As well as demanding more resources, immediate results could accrue from a better organisation of teaching for slow learners.

Dr E W H Briault,
Education Officer,
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'THE SCHOOL, THE COLLEGE AND THE COMMUNITY'

"I notice from your programme that a number of people will be speaking on particular aspects of the education of the less-able. I am no expert in this field and thought that what I might more usefully do would be to look at the picture as a whole, and say something about the broad setting in which you will be considering particular provision for these young people. Indeed, wholeness is my theme. Anyone such as myself who has been involved in educational administration for some time must have been concerned with organisation and re-organisation, with institutional structures and the like, and after many years of that kind of turmoil I have come to the general conclusion that whatever institutional structure you may arrive at, what really matters is the wholeness of the institution, whether it has an ethos of wholeness which makes sense to the people in it, and also its relationship with other institutions within the overall educational system. Whether you get rid of one break at 11 and substitute it at 9 and 13 instead, or you get rid of the break at 16 and have an 11-18 school, or have a 6th form college - somewhere you will have institutional breaks in the system. Wherever your institutional breaks, there remains the crucial task of trying to ensure that these breaks are overcome - from the point of view of the pupil or student - by the links between the parts of the overall system. That is why I chose this particular title - 'School, College and the Community' - the wholeness of the enterprise, the links between parts.

the whole context

This is, I think, particularly important for the less-advantaged who are probably more greatly hindered by breaks in the system than those who are more gifted and can overcome discontinuities by their own abilities and enterprise. Let us look briefly at the disadvantaged in the context of the whole, rather than just the 16-19 period. We in Inner London have a great deal to do with the disadvantaged and we are pretty sure that disadvantage begins before birth for some of our children, and that they come to school having so badly missed out on certain childhood experiences before the age of 5 that they are already trying to catch up even in the primary school. At whatever stage you consider the child - the pupil or the student - he or she lives in several different worlds, and part of the problem (particularly for the less-advantaged student) is that these worlds are divorced from one another. Each has its separate and distinct ethos, and the ethos and values of the school are often very different from those of the home, and both of these are different from those of the gang or peer-group or play centre, wherever much of the leisure time is spent. Part of the task of the school stage is to link back with the earlier and present home ethos of the pupil, to link up with the parent of the child in school. Now, if we consider the same youngster at 16 plus, the dichotomies and conflicting loyalties that have so far beset him are still there, but they are changed and magnified because he now moves in the world of work for

the most part as well as the worlds of home and leisure. Sometimes, though unfortunately in many cases not, he continues to move in the world of education.

the gap, 16-19

Part of my point in starting off with the pre-school age group is that it seems to me that a great deal of the root problem of disadvantaged lies in the gap represented by the 16 year old school leaver who is probably not involved with education in any formal sense and who, two or three years later, becomes the parent of the next generation of children. And that is the period, the 16-19 period, with which you are concerned. Particularly in the respect of the disadvantaged or less-able students, that is also the period when so often the damage is done or, so often, the opportunity not there to do something to ensure that the next generation of parents are less neglectful and more understanding of the needs of young children than so many of the present parents of disadvantaged students. But we lose them, do we not, in those two or three years in which many of them become parents. Very often they are reluctant parents, having children they don't want, whom they can't afford to bring up, whom they must park on mother-in-law or mum in order to continue earning and, very often, continuing to live with their parents even after marriage. This is the problem of the next generation of youngsters - the not-understanding, not-well-educated parent. It's true that in the later years of school tremendous efforts are made to introduce young people to the world outside school, to the world of work and the world of home-making, but in terms of parenthood it is - except for a very, very tiny minority - totally unrealistic. It's theoretical, and yet within two or three years the problems of having a young child to bring up are there. This is especially true for the less-advantaged of the 16-19s.

So my main theme is that we need to think very much more about the links between the parts of the system, about the links of the system and its institutions with the community in which the school is set to do its job.

secondary school and its links

Let us look now at the secondary school. The secondary school is set within the community and needs to develop its links with that community, and with the sectors of education that precede and follow it. It is fairly obvious that it needs to have links with its primary schools, with the welfare service which will have had contact with the more disadvantaged youngsters at the primary stage and whose knowledge of them has been carried through into the secondary school. It needs, too, to have links with the world of leisure. One of the difficulties is that, too often, the school teachers have little knowledge or understanding of what their pupils do outside school time. Indeed, you can find positive hostility between the school and the Youth Service. Nevertheless, they are two arms of the same education service, both seeking to serve the same young people and, very often, using the same premises and facilities.

The secondary school must also develop links with further education. This linkage must concern you if you are thinking about 16-19s. At the 16 stage the pupil must make a critical choice between several possibilities - of going out to work and having no further formal education (and that goes for 4/5ths of the girls and over ½ of the boys); of employment which will include day release; of full-time further education; and of remaining in school full-time and continuing to 17 or 18. How well informed, I wonder, are our young

people in their 5th year at school when they come to make those choices? I think, not well enough. The Careers Service has a heavy responsibility here, and does its best to ensure that the school leavers at 16 know about the opportunities in further education. But it does this through the very occasional contacts with the individual youngster. The real discontinuity arises, in my judgement, from the abysmal ignorance of most school teachers about further education. They know there is a college somewhere around, and they think it does technical studies, and they don't know much more about it than that. As for being able to give a realistic picture of the full and part-time opportunities in an FE college, I'm not sure whether one secondary school teacher in ten could do that. Since those who advise the 5th year will be, for the most part, the secondary school teachers, the school leavers are not going to be as well advised as they could or should be.

Having said that, I think that the prime responsibility for improving this situation lies with the colleges. It's all very well to sit there complaining that the schools don't know very much about FE; maybe some of us in FE colleges don't know enough about the schools. Maybe we don't make enough efforts to have realistic contacts with the schools. Maybe the link course is just one man in the college working with one man in the secondary school, whereas one of the additional advantages of the link course arrangements ought to be the development of a <u>real</u> and mutual understanding between secondary school and FE college. Not an easy thing, I know. I know there is always the danger that the secondary schools will suspect FE of attempting to poach their potential 6th formers. But this kind of misunderstanding - and it exists on both sides - can only be overcome through years of patient contact. We ought to set about it: there is far too little contact and even less understanding, in my judgement.

Finally the school must link up with the whole world of higher education, again with help and advice from the Careers Service. Here again, I suspect that there is insufficient real knowledge and understanding of both those in the schools and those in higher education of each other's work. Let me illustrate. The traditional school teacher is very familiar with the world of universities: he knows very much less about the polytechnics. He's heard of the CNAA but has the idea that their degrees involve getting your hands dirty rather than studying. Now the polytechnics are beginning to take the initiative towards the schools, beginning to invite 6th forms to visit them (something the universities have done for years), but there is still an incredible ignorance of the tremendous range of courses at degree level and above that they offer. While the Colleges of Education are known to the schools, but they are in the process of a very radical change and moving, for the most part, into the polytechnic world, the schools need help in keeping up to date with the changing world of higher education.

the 16 year old

I would like to think for a moment about the 16 year old as an individual, a whole person, rather than just a school pupil, and about the secondary school as a <u>building</u> as well as an institution. Out of school time a variety of other activities within the education service make use of these buildings and provide opportunities within them. One of these will be the Youth Centre, probably using the specialist facilities - the gym and maybe some of the workshops. We in London have begun to appoint Tutor Wardens to work partly in the school

and partly in the Youth Centre and pay them at FE rates. This should mitigate some of the antagonism, that I mentioned earlier, between these two arms of the education service. Other users of the school buildings with whom the school must relate are the Welfare Services and the Parents' Association, and all these organisations - including, perhaps, the further education college - will be competing for the use of precious accommodation. I have referred already to the important role of the Careers Service: there is also another interested party, the Adult Education Institute. Organisation regarding FE, AE and the Youth Service varies from Authority to Authority: in London they are separate. While there are strong arguments for bringing these together under a single service, I am not very happy about the suggestion (already in practice in some parts of the country) for bringing adult education under the FE college: there is a danger that AE would lose if it was a part of a college whose main emphasis is on traditional FE. The problems and opportunities presented by multi-use of buildings and the relationships of the secondary school to different bodies pose questions that you may well wish to consider: what I want to put to you is that there is surely a responsibility for those concerned with the 16-19s to ensure that they know the whole variety of provision that is available. This is a matter of management responsibility and structures of management responsibility both within the school and within the various other establishments and organisations.

the 18 year old

I should now like to focus on the 18 year old - from the point of view of the youngster himself rather than the institutional relationship. He is relating to the home, either a new home or one he is trying to set up in the old one; to work including trade unions and, possibly day release; to study through the FE college, polytechnic or university; and to leisure, either action or boredom, possibly through the Youth Service or Adult Education. The FE college with its links with employers and trade unions (through representation of governing bodies), with Adult Education and the Careers Service, is a potential source for the integration of these relationships.

FE & HE

I would like to dwell a little on the relationship between FE and HE. There is said to be some sort of move to make a hard and fast line between FE and HE: if true, I feel that this would be a grave mistake. There is a natural and proper movement to put more and more higher level work into the polytechnics, but so far they have retained some part-time work a high proportion of which is not full degree level. In my view it is right that polytechnics should have this mixture of work: they are institutions maintained by local authorities to serve both national and local needs (and I would not under-estimate their national role). It is equally right in my view that FE institutions not designated as polytechnics should not be prevented from offering courses at degree or degree equivalent level and, in my view, the overlap of provision is right. I fear that there are some who are building up a case for separating the two parts of this further/higher education system under the local authorities much more rigidly. If they were to succeed, I am afraid that opportunities would be diminished, especially for the less-advantaged students who would find it much more difficult to bridge the gap, to leap over the wall that would have been erected between FE and HE. It might also lead to the separation of HE from the maintained sector of individual local authorities. If that were to take place I think it would be a grave disadvantage because the argument,

surely, for a local authority maintaining a polytechnic or college of education is that it at least has some influence in ensuring that the institution continues to serve not only a national need, as it does, but particularly needs that relate to the community in which it is set. That, I think, is the right thing for the polytechnics to do.

Overlapping provision

Against that broad background of links and associations I would like to look a little more closely at the 16-19 year olds. I have emphasised the importance of an increase of knowledge and understanding of the various providing institutions so that a real choice for the student should be possible. Equally important is an overlap of provision between institutions. Some administrators favour a neat division of labour between the school and FE college, wherever that division comes in practice. I feel, however, that moves to 'tidy up' the system should be resisted because the one thing we do know about the older secondary school pupils is that they are very different. They have different needs and different rates of development. For this reason it seems to me that they ought to have choices, not only over courses but also over the environment, the atmosphere in which they should take those courses. Thus there should be 'A' level courses in both schools and FE - though I would admit that problems do arise over the economics of management of such provision.

Overlapping provision is particularly important for the less-advantaged 16-19 year old. Many stay on in schools for one year, ostensibly to gain a qualification that they didn't get at 16, and many from the general, rather vague motivation think that by staying on at school they are likely to achieve more or to be 'better educated' in some sense or other (this is particularly true of many of our immigrants). They stay on too, in my judgement, partly because of the sense of security in the school environment. The view of opponents of the 6th form college or tertiary college is that young people with this motivation who stay on now would leave if they had to change institution. Since protagonists of the above institutions maintain that it is rejection of or irritation with the ethos of the school that causes many of the less-able youngsters to ignore other educational provision, you can see why it is important that there should be overlap of provision for this age group.

CEE

In this context, I ought to say a little about the Certificate of Extended Education (CEE). One can envisage that the more able 16+ in school or college will stay on to 18 to take 'A' levels - or, in the not-too-distant future, some ordered pattern of studies such as the 6th Form Working Party has recommended. That being so, CEE had been conceived for that significant and increasing proportion of young people who stay on for one year only and who, in words of the same Working Party, were not high-achievers at 16. Unfortunately, during that period of mounting pressure for the rapid introduction of CEE the CSE Boards and those involved with them who have already introduced experimental CEE examinations, these people have built up pressure to push up the level of standards of CEE. Compare the grades provisionally, unofficially, unwarrantably given by the CSE Boards to people who have taken the experimental exams with the grade structure recommended by the Working Party Report and endorsed by the Governing Council of Schools' Council. There is a disastrous tendency for Examination Boards to raise their standards, and the people who are disadvantaged are those you are considering

this week, the less-able. This kind of trend must be resisted if the CEE is to be of any use to those for whom it is intended, those staying on for one year.

In this context, I should like to say that, in my judgement, many of those staying on at school for one or two years would be better served in the FE colleges. There are more full-time courses there which are more likely to both motivate and meet the needs of the less-able youngsters than there are in schools, and some young people are positively disadvantaged by being persuaded to chunter on with an 'O' level they are unlikely to pass while they could have taken a course in FE that would have acted for them as the first stage on the road of vocational qualifications to craftsmen or technician status which is what they will, hopefully, achieve. It is more than human nature can expect that there should build up any pressure on the part of the secondary schools to transfer more people to further education: somehow we've got to ensure that the choice is there, not only known to be there but put fairly and squarely before the young people. I wonder how many of those in FE have the opportunity of direct contact with the 5th year before they make that choice, a real opportunity to explain what FE can provide in continued full-time education as well as part-time study if day release can be obtained.

day release

This last point brings me to that large group of people we miss altogether, the 4/5th of girls and ½ of boys who don't even get day release. I noted that at the dinner of the annual meeting of the ATTI Mr Prentice issued a general invitation for advice as to how day release could be increased. Many of us are concerned that day release is at a standstill at the moment, and particularly concerned for the less-advantaged 16-19 year olds who don't get it and lose touch with the education service during these 3 years. The Henniker-Heaton Committee was set up with the specific responsibility of advising on Mr Prentice's problem, and we didn't really find an answer. There are 3 possibilities: to activate that part of the '44 Act and introduce compulsory day release; to introduce a right to day release (here it would be the less-able who, again, would lose); and, finally, of finding some way of offering a financial incentive to employers to release young people. Whether any government can afford to take the third alternative, I don't know. Given the economic state of the country and the likely developments of the next couple of years, the 'financial incentive' is quite a possibility: not because we can afford it but because we may <u>not</u> be able not to afford it.

I should like to conclue by quoting from 'On From School', a booklet that a Working Party in London produced in 1962. It was chiefly concerned with the less-advantaged students and FE provision, and written against a background of expectation that day release would increase. I want to quote from this because it brings me back to the point where I began, the wholeness of the individual student.... "If the FE colleges are to approach the variety of problems and provision which they are required to make with consistency and to achieve the maximum effectiveness in working towards all the objectives which have validity, it is important to recognise the unity which underlines this variety. This unity, we suggest, lies in the objective of seeking to help the young people to develop their whole personalities as far as their capabilities permit. This will only be done if all those who are concerned and, in particular, those who are concerned with educational provision, have a vision of the needs of the

young person as a whole person and if the fundamental objective is the best interests first and foremost of the young students, rather than a series of ad hoc attempts to meet requirements put forward by employers or even by the students themselves..... It is the vision of him as a whole person, not only the best worker, the best citizen, the best home-maker of the future, but the best person that he can be which those who are concerned with educational provision for him must needs have". "

Discussion Arising

Dr Briault said that the present view of the CEE was that candidates should follow a reasonably broad course of 5 subjects, presumably those in which the individual did best in up to 16, and with a syllabus more appropriate for the 'more mature'. It would be taken either for entry onto other courses or, hopefully, as a staging point before entry onto TEC and BEC courses. CEE was intended to be offered in FE: the Report stated that it was hoped that CEE would become available in the more vocational and practical subjects as well as the conventional school subjects. He admitted the danger of single subject specialists teaching their own subjects in isolation, and said that a significant proportion of the Working Party had wanted a completely integrated course: the practical reasons against advocating this approach more strongly was that at present there was insufficient practical experience in the schools of working on integrated courses and of team teaching. Teacher training courses could help here. He regretted the moves of some FE colleges to introduce an equivalent CFE (Certificate of Further Education) and said that he saw this as related to the complely schools-base of the constitution of the Schools' Council. There had been talk of a (separate) FE Council: he thought it would be far better to broaden the base of the Schools' Council.

On the question of disadvantaged adults, particularly immigrants, Dr Briault referred to the remarkable work of the Adult Education Institutes in London. With the Tutor Wardens the schools could reach the parents of the disadvantaged: the Tutor Warden at Brixton ran a play group for the immigrant mothers who learnt English from the AE teachers while the older girls in the school helped in the play group and thus learned something about the bringing up of children. He felt that the role of the FE college in the community was in providing opportunity for the 16-19 year olds, and through the appointment of 'out-reach' people to work ½ in the college and ½ in the community. He praised the community course for day release students at City College: the curriculum development had arisen through developing community work; from the students' real involvement in the community had come the development of communication skills through the language workshop.

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CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND THE LESS-ABLE

"J G Owen [1] said at Ingestre at a 1971 conference about ROSLA "An unquestioned truth which is accepted in the educational world, is that the more young people who remain in continued full-time education the better it is for society at large, and the better it is, in particular, for the human quality of the employee when he eventually emerges into the world of work".

Undoubtedly, if less-able pupils stay on in education they are likely to benefit, in their own way, as much as more able youngsters bent on tertiary education. As Joyce Ridding states [2] in an essay "Developments since 1971": "For the dullest child the time has arrived at 16, when he can perhaps at last benefit most from "formal" education; but elsewhere than the same centre/school that he has attended from 5, or earlier, to 16".

These young people could almost certainly be persuaded to carry on in education. But what of the other end of the continuum of the less-able: the slightly more intelligent, but reluctant, learners who are to be found frequently in special classes and remedial departments? They too would benefit, but perhaps later when they can realise the benefits of further education in economic terms. It is a problem of motivation.

Whether these pupils continue immediately with FE or return later, teachers of e. s. n. and slower adolescents need to know "in rigorous terms what is known about how children learn" and we need to act "more deliberately and with more imposed structure in working out their curriculum than those dealing with more able youngsters" as Brennan [3] puts it.

Is vocational training the answer ? How specifically vocational should the curriculum be? The Schools' Council Sixth Form and FE surveys seem to show that there is less likely to be immediate benefit from the monotechnic course rather than from the broader kind of course of general education. "This makes sense" says Owen "if we assume that the flexibility and economic usefulness of the working population will depend on its success in adapting to changing needs of industry, commerce and society; and this, in turn, will depend on higher levels of trained intelligence".

Let us remember that the less-able person's intelligence can also be trained; and they too will need to be adaptable, perhaps even more so as work possibilities continue to contract.

views of the consumers

What evidence is there about what young people think is useful in the curriculum? What do parents think? In the evidence offered in the Schools' Council Working Paper 33 "Choosing a Curriculum for the Young School

Leaver" [4] both pupils and parents see the school's job as vocationally inclined. When asked to rate the school's objectives in order of merit, 86% of boys and 89% of their parents thought "Help to get a good job" came first, 81% and 79% put "Teach things useful in job" second, and 74% and 79% placed "Aid job decisions" third. The girls and their parents produced nearly identical figures. All the other objectives supported by more than 50% of pupils and parents were vocational or social/vocational.

Objectives of a more abstract nature like "Develop interests", "Live away from home", 'Out of school clubs", "cultural visits" all came low on the list; although teachers thought well of these and this kind of aim.

These figures have implications for curriculum planning with older, less-able pupils; and it is clear at this point of time, that FE must be partly vocational for them to see the worthwhileness of it.

But there is a limit to vocational education which is possible or desirable. Most employers I have talked to are politely, but unmistakably cynical about much vocational training which schools have attempted; and firmly believe, quite reasonably, that the best training is done 'in situ'. This attitude has sound foundations in the psychology of learning which warns about the nebulous characteristics of the transfer of training. It seems that we can only prepare young people in a generally vocational way for work through work observation and careful choice (where this is possible) of work, and by developing their personal and social awareness and abilities as deeply as possible.

There is too, a danger in maintaining the traditional dichotomy between liberal education for able children, and vocational orientation for the rest. I consider that slower pupils, perhaps most of all, need intellectual challenge, otherwise we are "selling them short"; which is happening in many half-baked, apologetic ROSLA schemes.

I am most interested in the possibilities of improving less-able youngsters' cognitive abilities by intellectual stimulation at a level appropriate to each individual, and, at the same time, relating the problem solving situations used closely with reality. This implies a well-organised search for problems out of school as often as possible, in roads, shops, betting offices, offices and factories; in the police stations and printing works. It is here that the collecting of data and information from the community, working on group projects, talking inevitably to many strangers in and outside school that emphasis should lie. In these activities it is possible to encompass many of the cognitive and social requirements of the curriculum. These environmental studies activities should also relate to the development of creative and imaginative aspects of mathematics (not simply arithmetic) and English with other humanities, to provide for the continued growth of less-able students as people.

slow learners

Some characteristics of slow learners, who are not a homogeneous group:

1 They have low IQs which is a reflection, in part, of poor innate ability (that unmeasurable entity).

2 They usually have poor verbal ability which will impair their thinking (and

depress their IQs). It is manifested in a poor ability to express themselves, and has major social implications.

3 Reading ages are very often low. Useful reading is considered to be available to people with reading ages exceeding 9:0. (Much matter in the popular papers requires this level). Readability is dependent upon many factors including: vocabulary, sentence length, size and spacing of type face, interest factors, concepts involved.

4 Attention span is usually short, particularly in verbal tasks. Pieces of work must be short; the task must have variation.

5 Short term memory span is brief. They cannot easily remember a sequence of numbers or long instructions.

6 Dull pupils' thinking, following Piaget's schema, will remain very much in concrete terms, very reliant upon real and tangible evidence. The old Chinese proverb summarises educational implications well: "I hear and I forget, I see and remember, I do and I understand".

7 They may be clumsy and unco-ordinated so that gross and fine skills may be poor. Slow learners in adolescence may have additional problems of co-ordination (in addition that is to the normal ones provoked by the post-pubertal growth spurt common at this time) through the influence of mild cerebral dysfunction.

8 Many slow learners are distrubed and socially immature, remaining at a grossly ego-centric stage of development.

curriculum development

It is convenient to look at the many inter-acting factors in four areas of human development and need: (1) intellectual, (2) social, (3) emotional and (4) physical.

Intellectual development is influenced by the ability to perceive, the acquisition of language (the tool of thinking), the growth of reasoning and problem solving skills, and the widening of imaginative and creative ability. All these, in their turn, depend upon innate ability and upon opportunity.

Emotional development is dictated in part by one's constitution: one's temperament. Emotions are also learned. A child learns to love or hate through experience. Traits such as co-operation, curiosity, perseverance and aggression are partly inborn, but partly learned. Attitudes emerge from influences within and without a person. A pupil's self-attitude, self image, is crucially important to learning.

Attitudes are learned from four areas: home and family, school, the local cultures and sub cultures, and the mass media.

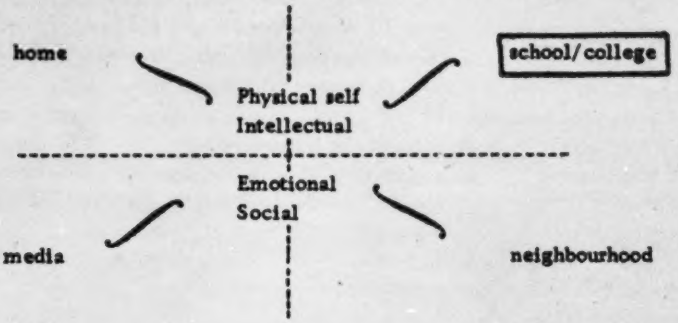
Social development depends upon intellectual and emotional progress. How well an adolescent gets on with other people will depend upon his temperament and how well he can communicate. How well he can communicate in friendly reciprocity depends partly on how well he perceives other people's points of view. How well a youngster can tolerate an admonition at work depends on these too.

Physical growth and mobility greatly influences early and later learning ability. (Early learning is sensory and tactile). Later on speed and stamina

may be problems at work.

All four areas interact in a complicated and subtle mesh: eg. in language. Language is affected by innate intelligence; by environment (how talkative, bookish it is, for example); by emotional factors: temperament and attitudes (deprived children tend to develop language skills much slower than happier placed children); by physical opportunities (to play games, for example: If a person can play games he is more attractive socially, so he needs to use language more).

The social influences in these four areas can be crudely diagrammed thus:



School or college has only a part to play; but an enthusiastic teacher or, preferably, a group of teachers can extend the school's influence beyond the arbitary quarter indicated. Conversely, an apathetic school, or a demoralised one can reinforce the unhelpful elements which may be present elsewhere.

It is worth noting that formal education is the one which seems least real. It is our job as teachers to keep education (in this sense) in touch with the real world (in the first instance anyway) "where people go to work in shops and fields, offices and factories; where young people serve their time in apprenticeships or do it in prison; here they have babies they don't want, and want lovers they can't have" to borrow Harry Rée's words. (5)

A framework for taking cognisance of this, in the four developmental areas, and to attempt to ensure that the least able survive in society is provided by this grid* which assumes that each individual needs personal, social and vocational awareness within these areas. This represents a starting point, a minimum only.

This grid takes account of society's demand on and expectations of less-able adolescents, where the Society is essentially materialistic, competitive, complicated and literate; and where there exists less and less tolerance of the unsuccessful and illiterate. This is a framework for survival, but also attempts to take into account the development of the individual.

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* See next page.

	Personal	Social	Vocational
Physical	co-ordination skills	safety at home on the roads	safety at work stamina/speed
	health (health habits hygiene dental care smoking sleep food)	games skills, camping climbing, YHA parenthood, sex child health and development	health at work health services
Social	family relationships	attitudes to local, national, inter- national events newspapers, tv,	work mates, trades unions
	moral concepts	manners social services clubs/gangs role playing team spirit community service	meeting new people the work hierarchy social activity at work
Emotional	Personal adjustment confidence and self esteem creativity: art/craft workmanship drama: role playing creative writing independence personal responsibility	frustration tolerance ←→ responsibility for others (family)	job satisfaction tolerating an admonition " a "leg pull" self discipline perseverance adaptability
Intellectual	thinking problem solving money management budget speech and language literacy (reading) advertising self awareness limitations	social awareness co-operation time-keeping transport topology communication telephoning talking to children	alertness job choice (observation) working conditions listening skills interviews wages, stoppages

Personal adjustment (column 1) involves the pupil as a prospective earner and eventually a family man. It depends upon the school-pupil relationship considerably. Within this the school may helpfully influence and advise in individual and group situations; some would call this counselling.

Experience often shows that it is within the area of personal relationships that less-able people fail at work and elsewhere. One small, apparently trivial occurrence can upset a precarious emotional balance with less-able young people, who lack the cognitive insights to enable them to rationalise the happening and see it in perspective.

Personal relationships with the opposite sex must find a place here. It is a sensitive part of the work and difficult to summarise, but respect for the other person, and the economic, as well as the moral logic of marriage must be main aims. Mutual and self help need encouragement too.

Young people need help to adjust to the double standards that exist in society School preaches honesty, etc., but often at work, cheating and thieving are common place. School encourages cheerfulness and friendliness, but these are sometimes reciprocated at work with hostility and malice. The Schools' Council Moral Education Project materials have been found useful in practice in this part of the curriculum; as have etv and radio broadcasts where the situations are dramatised into recognisable and meaningful problems.

Social awareness (middle column) implies a reaching out into the community and for the least able this requires an essential programme for finding their way round the locality. The whereabouts of social, health and employment services are vital, as is telephoning technique. The well-known strategy of sending pupils out on a expedition, seeking information, and having them report in by telephone is valuable.

Reinforcement of literacy and oracy skills are practised in the reporting of visits and journeys by individuals and groups. Much work in the ordering and collating of data follows every visit, which need to be preceded by careful and thorough preparation so that students know what they are seeking. Teamwork is developed in the working of large scale, joint projects in which each member of the group needs to contribute accurately for it to be successful.

Vocational awareness (column 3) needs to be encouraged early. Choice of work available is reviewed by kind: light/heavy, indoor/outdoor, etc. This choice is informed by observation and visits, by talks by visitors to school.

Ways of seeking and applying for jobs are considered. "A Good Big Smile" by Bill Naughton [8] is a good starter. Schools' radio and television provide useful supportive materials for this and other topics: safety and health at work, "getting on" with work mates; and the trades unions. Wages and wage slips need understanding, as do appropriate ways of checking on and rectifying possible mistakes. Among descriptions of work observation schemes with e.s.n. children the one described in "Special Education" at Ifield School, Kent [6] is among the most tenacious and more interesting.

conclusion

I am not convinced that training in workshop skills (or anything similar) is the answer for the less-able. It may provide one small part of the curriculum, but I think there is much more to the less-able than trainable, factory fodder. They have feelings too and personalities which can be enriched through intellectual, creative and imaginative channels. I am frankly disappointed

by reports which describe in enthusiastic terms the major part work experience or "factory units" play in less-able youngsters' final year at school. Other possibilities are minimised; workshop drills maximised.

Some advocates of total vocational training speak of learning plateaux in literacy and numeracy areas; and quite recently I even heard a LEA adviser for special education talking about "a saturation level for literacy work at the age of about 13 with ESNs"; which is demonstrable nonsense. There are very many teachers who have taught pupils to read in their last term at school (including myself) in special schools and remedial departments. One example: Denise struggled with reading and writing right through her schooling. She arrived in my 4th year secondary group at the same time that we tried out the Schools' Council Moral Educational material. Sometimes I required them to follow our discussions of some of the problems set by writing about them. Many of the girls used the problems as bases for fantasy stories. Denise included this remarkable sentence in a story about a small girl getting separated from her mother in a large shop: "Jane was looking for some sweets around the corner from where her mother was talking, there's a lot of counters and bends in Tesco's, and when she turned round one of the bends and her mother was gone". It is complex with one small error. It contains you will notice four clauses, one of which is parenthetical. The rest of the story was logical, well spelled and punctuated. From that day Denise went forward rapidly; but it was her last term. Such progress, such sudden sophistication proposed a wonderful prognosis; but I couldn't persuade her to stay on for CSE. Denise's IQ? It was 71, and seemed that, when she came to the school at 11.

There seems to be no dire developmental reason why the less-able should not continue to learn intellectual skills (as well as others) for many years after 16, leave alone 13. There are motivational and pedagogic problems which are for us to solve; and these perhaps suggest a thorough development of f. e. at colleges, where some of the social, as well as the all round educational aims of the curriculum might be better fulfilled. It would require an extensive marshalling of considerably more resources and expertise than the colleges yet command.

Certainly there has been a rapid growth in the attempts to foster linked courses in the Midlands, though with a natural enough preference shown by the colleges for the brighter pupils. In four years, from 1969, establishments offering linked courses of one kind and another, had risen from a handful to 42, involving some 14,000 students.(7) Some ESN "leavers" are, I know, included in this number.

An alternative might be a 6th form provision for the least able; and, at my own school we have had a very small experience with a few ex "remedials" with low IQs staying on into the 6th form and tackling the CSE examinations. It might, indeed, be advantageous for slower pupils to remain within an establishment which knows them well, and has some personnel, at least, who are experienced in the art of teaching slow learners. But paradoxically, of course, schools (particularly residential schools) emphasise social problems for their pupils by their especially caring attitude. Teachers in special schools

and most remedial teachers are usually child centred; other teachers are often much more subject orientated. Beyond school and college, of course, the world, as I have said, is very competitive and comparatively hard.

projects

Work done in some of the projects I have mentioned is displayed. These are based on environme[illegible] topics carried out in "basic studies" lessons, which are part of the opt[illegible]ing at my school for 4th and 5th forms. The aims of these [illegible] stimulate interest in and knowledge of the pupils' own lor[illegible]nctions, for good and ill; and to provide [illegible]x with a motivational value: eg. letters are wri[illegible]nformation, strangers need to be app[illegible]s to be collected and collated acc[illegible]become not only the tools of survival, but a r[illegible] the world around, and of questioning its ten[illegible]

Often this work naturally overlaps with the mathematics and English of problem solving, creation and expression which are developed in "normal" English and maths lessons elsewhere on the timetable. The style of the basic studies projects complements the other work and strengthens it.

I have not raised the question of internal organisation within a school because we are more concerned with older students beyond compulsory school age; but the curriculum and organisation (eg. mixed ability grouping or some sort of streaming/setting) are inter-twined; and the kind of organisation decided upon has important social and academic repercussions in the education of the less-able. But perhaps in the end, it matters not so much where <u>further</u> education happens for the less-able, but rather <u>what</u> happens and the spirit in which it is conducted."

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G T Montford,
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City & Guilds of London Institute

CITY AND GUILD COURSES FOR THE UNSKILLED

"Before dealing with three aspects of C & G work in this area - day release for the unskilled, a Literacy Research project with ILEA, and the Institute's thoughts on possible full-time courses for the less academic 16 year old - I ought to emphasise that the Institute is an Examining Board and does not undertake any actual teaching. It prepares curricula to meet the needs of industry and the colleges, and sets examinations on the results of which it awards its certificates.

With the day release courses for the unskilled we run into problems of definition. Firstly, this conference is concerned exclusively with the 'less-able': less-able than who? Usually when C & G staff address conferences, it is we who talk about the less-able since, in comparison with the 'O' and 'A' levels, most of our courses are for the less academic student. In the context of this conference, however, most of our courses appear to be pitched at too high a level. When we consider C & G courses for the unskilled, we are faced with further difficulties. Let me explain what I mean. In 1973 there were 113,892 entrants to technician courses, 172,780 to craft, and 4,959 to operative courses. Now technician and craftsmen are obviously skilled - but are the operatives unskilled? In 'Better Opportunities' the principal distinction between craftsmen and operatives was in breadth of skills they possess: so that operatives do exercise skills, but within a narrower range (than the craftsmen). So, on the face of it, the Institute does not have many courses for the unskilled. This is reinforced when we look at a breakdown of the examination statistics for operative courses in 1973. We find that the 4,959 entries are spread over 33 different courses. If we look at the largest group, the 1906 candidates entered by the Science and Metallurgical industries, we cannot infer that we have any especially enlightened employers. It so happens that, within this group of so-called operatives are a number of highly skilled occupations - the chemical process plant operators and the furnacemen in the steel industry - and some of these might be better classified as craftsmen or technicians. Particularly disappointing is the engineering industry where we find a meagre 444 entries for operative examinations. If the engineering industry, which is probably the country's largest single industrial employer, allowed so few of its operatives to have release, we can deduce that there is very little industrial support in the country at large for courses below craft level.

This lack of industrial support is due to a number of factors. The requisite skills are relatively easily learnt in short training courses, and employers see little advantage in giving these operatives release, a view which is further reinforced by high staff turnover. Even if release is given, many would not stay with the firm long enough to complete the course. Many factors contribute to this high staff turnover, but prominent among them are the monotony

of the jobs and the lack of career structure for these unskilled employees. When we consider the cost to industry in lost production through releasing their operatives, and when we see how little they will get out of it directly, we can perhaps understand their reluctance to release operatives to colleges.

Then there is lack of student support for operative courses. Operatives are normally found to be those who were not conspicuously successful in school, and many of them will have rejected education. Then there is the lack of any motivating factor. They get no extra bonus, no chances of promotion, from satisfactorily completing a course. There is no reason why they should be interested: they get no rewards and they see no use in further education. So, even if you get them into the colleges, you then have the problem of keeping them there.

In the light of the lack of support from employers and employees, what should we do? It may be a truism, but it needs stating - that the first job is 'selling'. It won't matter how good our courses are if the employers will not release their operatives. So we must ensure that the design of our courses makes clear their value to industry.

An analysis of all operative courses shows that there are a number of common factors incorporated into their design. There is a technical content which is of direct relevance to the employer, and an educational content which is aimed at the employee and of indirect relevance to the employers. Under the technical content we include: general background to processes; background specific to the students' own job; and safety. While being an essential part of the course, 'safety' is a good selling point to employers as industrial accidents cost individual employers a small fortune each year.

Under the educational content we include: communications and calculations; and general studies. General studies would include the social education of the student, involving, for example, such topics as industrial studies and preparation for parenthood. Communications and calculations are seen as basic skills which underlie both the technical and the social education. If you are able to 'sell' the technical content on the basis that a more informed worker is a better and safer worker, you might be able to 'sell' the general education content on the basis that a more responsible citizen will make a more responsible worker. And with the likelihood of employees taking up equal representation on Boards of Directors it will be important that this social education is given.

So much for the factors to interest employers, but once we have got the students in the colleges we have to keep them. For these students the Institute has to provide sufficient flexibility in course content and course structure so that colleges can accommodate a wide variety of student interest. Indeed, as far as teaching method is concerned, experience has shown that it is very often the student-centred, independent learning, 'one-off' approach that works best with this level of students. It must be said, however, that this teaching approach involves the staff in a tremendous amount of preparation.

I must here give a mention to the 150 Series for Industrial Operatives, for this course is perhaps the nearest the Institute has got in the development of a course

specifically for the unskilled. . The aim of the course is "to provide a means for continuing and widening the educational development of the students, and not merely to teach job knowledge of immediate application". This course, therefore, includes both the technical and the general educational contents mentioned above. In the course we have tried to provide colleges with a flexible framework within which they can work as most appropriate to meet the needs of local industrial interests and of the students. The course structure has three main components which follow the broad outline mentioned above:-

the general technical core	-	60 hours
specific technical applications	-	60 hours
communications, calculations and general studies	-	90 hours

Assessment can be either mode 1 or mode 3. Colleges can either work to the published syllabus on Basic Metal working or Electronics Assembly - or, if these do not meet local needs, they can devise their own. Assessment in this case can either be by an end-test or by means of course work. All in all, the 150 course should provide colleges with a framework within which they can devise their own courses to meet the needs of both their local industries and their students.

I would like to turn now to our involvement in the Literacy Research Project organised by ILEA. This venture, involving remedial education as it does, is a new departure for the Institute. We first became involved in January 1973 when an ILEA Inspector came to the Institute and brought to our notice the low standards of literacy amongst craft students. It was suggested that we restructure the C & G craft courses in order to make the general studies component a higher priority in the early part of the course, and to make literacy work play a much larger part within this component. The possibility of certification (in this component) was also discussed as this, it was thought, would motivate the students and might ease the integration of the communications work with the technical studies. Finally, the desirability of devising some diagnostic tests in communications skills was agreed.

As a result of this meeting the Institute asked its Examinations Board to approve a Certificate in Communications Skills but this it refused to do on the grounds that communications was seen to be part of the general studies curriculum, and it was Institute policy not to examine in general studies. The matter was referred to the Policy Committee who agreed to the Institute's co-operating with ILEA in a research project so long as any assessment and certification was optional to the course.

The approach we adopted in the first instance was to attempt to isolate the skills involved. We can do this quite easily for specific industrial skills - eg. those involved in bricklaying - but it is not so easy for communications skills. We started by identifying the broad areas of skills which we wished to improve: these were:-

receiving and interpreting oral messages;

expressing himself orally both accurately and explicitly;
extracting information from written sources;
expressing himself in writing; and
coping with a real-life situation.

We then attempted to break these down into the more specific ways in which the students might have to communicate with other people. Thus, in 'expressing himself orally both accurately and explicitly' the student might be describing concrete things, eg. a piece of machinery, or events. He might be making enquiries, expressing an opinion or giving an explanation. We then tried to identify the context in which the student might communicate in the three main areas which make up his environment - as a worker, a citizen and a student. So we consulted employers, lecturers and the students themselves so that we could compile more detailed lists of situations. Thus, part of the list for writing situations is: time sheets, reports, forms (accident, tax), instructions in note form, requests in note form, and lists of materials.

Having decided what skills we wished to improve and in which situations they were used, we then had to decide on the teaching strategy best suited to the students. The wide range of ability in communications skills among the craft students led us to adopt a student-centred approach. Individual students work at their own speed on a series of assignments which take the form of simulations of the identified situations, and they are therefore given practice in ways in which they will have to communicate in real life. However, this method puts a great onus on the teacher, for it is essential that he can identify their individual communication problems. Once he has identified these, he must then make materials for the student to work on.

Let me now run quickly through a sample assignment, 'Accident', which simulates the communications situations which would follow the electrocution of a store-keeper. The materials include:

Accident Instructions - a standard poster normally on view in electrical workshops setting out what to do in the case of electrocution;
9 Picture Cards - cards setting out pictorially the stages of a young man following the accident instructions to rescue an electrocuted colleague;
Accident Report Forms - standard forms on which the details and circumstances of the accident are to be reported;
Student Sheets - instructions to the student on the assignment; and
Assessment Sheet - guidance to the teacher on the criteria to be used in assessing student performance.

The 'Student Sheet' for 'Accident' reads as follows:-

1 'read the accident instructions';
2 'put cards in right order': this is the method by which the student shows that he has read and understood the accident instructions;
3 'you are the young man; give an account of the accident into the tape recorder': an exercise in the use of informal language when talking by telephone to a colleague;

4 'give the exact words of your telephone message into the tape recorder': an exercise in formal language when 'phoning for an ambulance:

5 'fill in the Accident Report Form': an exercise in writing in a restricted situation.

The need for some form of evaluation of student performance has raised a number of fundamental questions. For example, what is an adequate performance? How do we recognise it? How can we attempt to judge the performance of a student in a face-to-face situation? It is a fact about communications that at least 2 people are involved: how do you evaluate whether a breakdown in communications is the fault of the speaker or of the spoken-to? From these questions you will see that we have still a long way to go with this project, but we hope that in a year's time we will begin to have answers to some of the above questions.

Finally, I should like to talk about the Institute's possible involvement with full-time courses for the less-academic 16-19 year old. City and Guilds has traditionally been concerned with part-time courses, so involvement with full-time courses would mark a departure from the past.

Over the last 18 months we have received a large number of requests from both schools and colleges to offer some of our existing courses on a full-time basis. We refused these requests on the grounds that the courses are too narrowly conceived. We did, however, know that a number of institutions were already running C & G courses on a full-time basis, and we feel that the time is ripe for a fundamental review of the requirements of the non-academic 16-19 year old who wishes to stay on in full-time education. The Schools' Council's Working Papers 45 and 46 envisaged a much larger proportion of these pupils staying on than formerly and, indeed, showed that this is already happening. However, in our view the Working Papers ignore some very fundamental questions. Why are they staying on for an extra year? What do they accomplish by this? What kind of course is most appropriate to their needs? These are the questions which we are now asking.

As a starting point we drew up an outline model of a possible curriculum which was based on the Institute's experience with students in part-time education. We identified 5 major aims for the course:-

a to make the student more aware of his social environment and of his place in it;

b to provide an awareness of the implications of technology as they affect the student;

c to introduce some of the considerations, constraints and responsibilities existing in the work environment;

d to provide a broad educational base on which an informed choice of career can be made; and

e to provide a level of achievement which will allow entry at an appropriate level to FE courses.

We then said a little about how we thought those aims might be achieved. We thought that about 2/5th of the curriculum should be aimed at the social education of the student, and this might best be approached through the student's

experience in his own environment. A further 2/5th of the curriculum could be given over to an area (or areas) of vocational interest eg. Technology Studies (making things) including both engineering and construction; or Personal Services (working with people) including nursing, social services, hairdressing, etc. Underpinning both the Social and Vocational Education should be a concentration on basic numeracy and literacy, ie. maths and English, as a means to an end and not as ends in themselves. The Institute's experience with these students has led it to believe that it would be desirable to get away from the single-subject approach to teaching, and we thought that we would like to see the social and vocational studies integrated into a curriculum which would be meaningful to the student. The last 1/5th of the curriculum is given over to extra-curricula activities.

Over the last 6 months members of the Institute's staff have been discussing this model with schools and colleges throughout the country and, as a result of the encouragement received, we called an informal meeting of interested institutions. At this meeting it was decided to invite colleges and schools to join with the Institute in a series of feasibility studies to investigate the requirements of the less academically-inclined 16 year old in more detail and, in particular, to collect information on suitable course structure to meet the identified requirements. We also intend testing the hypothesis that an integrated course is essential.

It is the Institute's view, therefore, that a fundamental reappraisal of the needs of this group of students is required, and that before a curriculum can be designed in detail, much more information is required. Once this information is available the Institute intends to sponsor work in curriculum centres to assist in the production of a course. Whilst this work has been going on, the Institute has also been having discussions at an administrative level with the Schools' Council, as a result of which it has been decided that we should apply to the Secretary of State to become an Examining Board in our own right for the Certificate of Extended Education."

Discussion Arising

Since the CEE and its validity had been briefly discussed earlier in the week, it was this area of Mr Montford's address that was taken up in the time left of the session. Asked to sketch in the relationship of the CEE to the CSE and to 'O' level, Mr Montford said that Schools' Council aimed the CEE at students who had already achieved CSE grades 2-4, and that some CEE grades would be considered equivalent to GCE 'O' level. If this equivalence was accepted, CEE could act as an exemption from existing FE courses, possibly including TEC and BEC courses, though that was outside the responsibility of either Schools' Council or C & G. To the comment that the CSE had originally been conceived to do precisely the job now outlined for the CEE, Mr Montford disagreed, pointing out that CEE was envisaged as an examination at 17+, ie. normally 1 year after 'O' level, whilst the CSE was designed for 16+ as an alternative to 'O' level. However, there did appear to be a danger that the CEE might end up being yet another attempt at an academic 'O' level. It was clear that the time had come for a fundamental re-thinking of curricula for those who had opted to stay in

education, and the Institute would welcome the chance to do this through the proposed full-time course. He agreed with a member's warning about the proliferation of courses, but explained that the Institute had taken the view that since the signs indicated that the CEE was a foregone conclusion, the best contribution it could make was to join in rather than trying to run a separate Certificate of Further Education (as had been suggested by some conference members).

On the mechanics of the scheme outlined in the address, Mr Montford said that it was hoped that a genuine team-teaching approach could be adopted. The success of the new OND in Technology had demonstrated that this approach was feasible, and this would be another way of avoiding an over-specialised treatment of the course. To the scepticism of one conference member of the schools' ability to hand the vocational aspects of the course he had described Mr Montford said that the link course might provide the answer. Also, it should be realised that some girls' schools were already running vocational courses and some local authorities appointing staff into schools to teach vocational courses.

R C Aldridge, Principal, City College for Further Education, ILEA

'PRE-TOPS COURSES FOR THE LESS-ABLE'

The conference was shown a video-tape of the Pre-TOPS course at City College (made by the college staff). This included interviews with four - representative - students; an introduction of the approach of the course through a discussion between the Course Organiser and the Lecturers responsible for the literacy and numeracy work; student feedback on the course; shots of the literacy and numeracy work in progress; and, finally, the three Lecturers evaluating the curriculum and suggesting modifications for the next year.

In this session Mr Aldridge and, on tape, the staff concerned with the course made the following comments.

"The new Manpower Services Commission is composed of an Employment Services Agency and a Training Services Agency, and has already proposed a number of programmes, some to meet the training needs of industry and others the training needs of individuals. It is under this latter programme that the TOPS courses operate. It is important to note that, as far as FE is concerned, this is a new concept. The courses sponsored by the old Industrial Training Act were all designed to meet the needs of industry, while this new emphasis on the training needs of the individual starts at the other end.

What kinds of individuals take advantage of the TOPS schemes? First of all, there are those who want new skills, not necessarily at a higher level but, perhaps, because they had the wrong choice of career or because their skills have become outdated due to industrial and technological advance. Then there are those who do wish to retrain at a higher level - this, and the next group, are potentially very large indeed. Finally, there are those who wish to re-enter employment after a long absence. This absence may have been caused by an accident, or a long illness or, of course, the students may be married women who have been occupied in bringing up a family. (I ought to say that, of all the students we've had, only one has been a 'native' woman: while I think that married women are, very likely, the largest group of all, there are problems in giving them access - creches, etc. - which we clearly haven't solved yet.)

Why, then, are there pre-TOPS courses when there are TOPS courses for vocational - eg. secretarial, industrial - skills? Pre-TOPS courses began in this way. People present themselves at the Agency (TSA) and ask to go on a Government Training scheme. They are given an appropriate test, very often in arithmetic and English, and some of them don't measure up to the standards for particular jobs. It is then suggested that they come onto a pre-TOPS course which is designed specifically to improve basic numeracy and literacy skills. So the people who come on the courses have, in fact, been rejected by other government training schemes. I understand that there is some (government agency) move afoot to

make the course, not only a pre-TOPS course, but also an end in itself for some students. Whether or not this happens, the scheme is certainly changing rapidly. I should mention at this point that the Department of Employment have been very generous: if they've felt that someone would at all benefit from the scheme, they have allowed them on. And, of course, all the students are receiving grants from the Department while they are being trained. After the initial suggestion, the applicants come to the college where they are interviewed by a joint panel of the Department and college staff. If they are accepted, and most of them are, they begin a 16 week full-time course at the college. At the end of the course they are again tested by the Department and, hopefully, gain entrance to a specific TOPS course.

Our pre-TOPS course caters for those with special needs and, speaking very generally, the students fit into 4 broad groupings - those who have had a long illness, either mental or physical; the disabled; immigrants; and the socially disadvantaged. Two groups are very under-represented: very few British women present themselves to the Agency - we have only dealt with one - and, of course, young people; the only ones that qualify at present are the disabled and those who have been unemployed for a considerable length of time. The talk of extending the scheme to more young people, ie. paying them to come to college, would mark a radical change in policy if ever implemented. Again speaking generally, application to go on a TOPS course frequently comes after some crisis point in the lives of the students.

On the 3 pre-TOPS schemes we have run so far we have taken 50 students who represent a wide range of age, ability and country of origin. The oldest student was 54 and the youngest 18; the median age being under 30. 40% are of UK origin, there are large groups of West Indians and Asians, and much smaller groups of Europeans and Africans. Apart from the British group, the sexes are fairly evenly divided. While the age range presented no problems, the range of attainment and countries of origin did. Ability in English spread between one student on an initial reading scheme and some Creole speaking students, to a few who were of '0' level standard. As for numeracy, the problems here were less lack of ability to do the arithmetic than difficulty in understanding the questions in the first place. With these difficulties a workshop - individual and group-work - approach was adopted for the literacy work. This approach had been first developed in the college for the 16-19 day release students and, since it had been successful with young adults, was applied to the pre-TOPS field. The Lecturer responsible for developing numeracy skills has now decided to adopt this method of teaching. Another mechanism for coping with the spread of individual abilities on the course has been to double time-table the literacy and numeracy staff so that either can go into the other's period to give more help to students with particularly acute problems. I ought to say that this kind of work, if it is to be done properly, is highly labour-intensive.

The foremost objective of the course is to diagnose and to produce programmes to meet individual needs in communications and arithmetic in order that the students should meet the vocational requirements of the TOPS courses they wish to enter. Other objectives that the staff concerned consider important are, firstly, coping with learning and, secondly, overcoming individual disadvantages. On the former, most of the students will have had unsatisfactory educational

experiences - eg. breaks in schooling, etc. - in the past: how can we best prepare them for, firstly, the more informal (than school) atmosphere in which we teach and, secondly, for their next period of training on the TOPS course? One suggestion is that we use the tutorial to help them understand how learning takes place, perhaps by using something like the BBC 'Use Your Heads' series. On the latter point, some of the students have pretty tremendous problems - financial, domestic and emotional problems. The staff see their roles very clearly as providing an educational (and not social) service, and feel that to give a great deal of thought to suggesting ways in which they, the students, can handle their own problems is as much as they (the staff) should do. They have observed that as the students gradually accept the responsibility for their own learning and they start to get a sense of achievement, this process tends to diminish - or, at least, contain, their emotional problems. This containment becomes increasingly important. The staff suggestion here was that they should do more of what they are already doing in the workshop session on 'citizen-type' projects - to give them the knowledge and skills to operate as participating members of the community - and, perhaps, structure this work more into the week's programme.

Finally, I ought to refer to the growth of the TOPS schemes since this has implications for the development of the kind of work I have been describing. From the "Five Year Plan" of the Training Services Agency one can deduce that the TOPS courses will be big business as far as FE colleges are concerned. Compare the 25,000 students now in colleges with the 7,000 two years ago. The scheme only started in '65 and a fairly rapid growth is planned. There will be 32,000 TOPs students in the colleges in 1976, and a projected 54,000 in '77 (of the total 70-75,000 projected for that year).

One of the guest speakers to the ACHFE at Bournville this year was Sir Dennis Barnes, Chairman of the Manpower Services Commission, and in the course of his address he raised the following questions about the TOPS scheme. They would seem to have relevance to the pre-TOPS programmes:-

1 How can more married women be given access? Is the answer more flexible hours, or perhaps running college creches? There is a problem with the latter solution in that I understand that ILEA, as an educational institution is not allowed to do this: we would have to get the local Borough to do this.

2 Should the scheme be extended to more groups of young people? At the moment it is only open to those who have left school for 3 years or are disabled - though there is a limited provision under TOPS (not pre-TOPS) for those with long periods of unemployment. Another question is whether, for this group, the course could act as an end in itself.

3 Will there be a conflict between the needs of industry and the needs of the individual?

4 If as is predicted, unemployment rises drastically within the year, what is the place of the TOPS and pre-TOPS scheme for this situation?

I leave you with these questions."

Discussion Arising

In response to questions and comments Mr Aldridge said that some of the factors that contributed to the success of the pre-TOPS scheme were: that the prime objectives were common to both staff and students; the workshop method of teaching and the team approach of the staff; the interest of the college hierarchy, demonstrated by the Vice-Principal and Head of Department contributing to the weekly tutorials; the fact that the students had a room of their own (though other classes used it occasionally); and, finally, the concentration on the educational, not social, nature of the course.

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GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING OF THE DISADVANTAGED

disadvantaged
less-able

"Let us be quite clear: by no means are all disadvantaged children 'less-able'. Nor can be 'disadvantaged' be equated with poverty, or be thought to apply only to children born into working class families. There are those children whose educational attainment is low, which fact may be attributable to limited innate ability. But there are also many whose attainment is low, but who in fact have considerably more potential than is credited. Their performance may be inhibited by environmental tensions, immaturity or social handicap. Poverty, poor housing, social environment and family problems are statistically proven contributory causes. The illerates are usually found within these groups. We must also not overlook the fact that energy-sapping emotional deprivation can occur equally amongst children from affluent homes, and in this group there is the larger number of cases of those who make diminishing progress because of anxieties (their own or their parents') about examination success. Thus a complexity of factors may contribute to 'deprivation'; there are no simple definitions or single solutions.

the need to release
hidden potential

In any circumstances the prospects for such young people are less rosy than for their counter-parts: they are more likely to become the chronic job changers, the dropouts or the anti-social citizens of tomorrow. In latter years the Youth Employment Services have met increasing difficulty in finding jobs for the unqualified and untrained young people entering industry at below craft level and all the indications are that with the extension of technology, this problem will escalate. In 'Profile of the Future' A C Clarke comments that "the one fact about the future of which we can be certain is that it will be utterly fantastic". We have present evidence to give grounds to this claim and to convince us that as educators we are faced with an assignment far beyond training a person for one traditional vocational field. Our task is to heighten the powers of intellect, strengths of personality and perception, the ability to make judgements and decisions commensurate with the personal and social demands ahead. Ways and means have to be found of enhancing the potential of <u>all</u> students - and this includes the disadvantaged.

objectives of
guidance and
counselling

The fundamental objectives of both counselling and guidance are to facilitate the development of the individual person - educationally, vocationally and personally. 'Guidance' covers the system and structure provided specifically to promote these ends. There is also an educative aspect of guidance, involving the education of both mind and emotion; in the process the initiative lies largely with the tutor or leader.

Counselling is a service within guidance for which the student may opt. It is concerned pre-eminently with what he is feeling - about himself and his circumstances - and in helping him to gather his own resources and to move towards

autonomy. Here the counsellor largely takes his cues from the client. The principles upon which both are based have an important contribution to make in preparing all young people to meet the future.

non-segregation

Invariably discussions at depth on the 'ROSLA' pupil have led to the realisation that in considering them one is inevitably considering the needs of all students; the concepts relevant to one group are relevant to all. Segregation only serves to promote a self-fulfilling prophecy that there are those who are destined to be 'second class citizens'. The educational unit needs to be an integrated society offering a variety of provisions, differences of approach but not differentiation, and a width of opportunity for interaction between people of different background and experience.

With these caveats, let us look at some features inherent in the situation.

some basic needs

In a counselling relationship (as in any other) it is of prime importance that the individual feels himself to be respected and entirely accepted, just as he is, as a person in his own right. That is not as simple as it sounds. Many disadvantaged young people have a deep sense of being de-valued, which on the one hand is expressed in a depressed fatalism and expectation of failure, or by a 'front' of cavalier indifference. It may take some time before they are convinced of the belief that someone else has in their intrinsic value and potential. They need constant re-assurance of this.

There are often very understandable grounds for either depression or hostility. This calls for very sure sustained support and acceptance from the counsellor while the client is helped to work his way through these feelings to what he sees as the next stage of progress for him.

'Softness' or any trace of seeming condescension will evoke an immediate 'anti' reaction. There may be frequent over-reaction emotionally: the counsellor must withstand this without responding similarly and at a further stage help the individual to come to grips with handling his emotions. Paradoxically the same young person may surprise one with the equanimity with which he or she carries some considerable family responsibility or hardship.

The extent of the social experience of the disadvantaged is often very limited: within their familiar surroundings they have confidence and one has to present the opportunity for gradually widening their experience, making quite clear what the expectations are and encouraging them to carry their confidence over into the new situation.

Perhaps one of the main areas of difficulty is in regard to language. Bernstein writes of the 'Restricted Code' by which the under-privileged are often hide-bound, and provision for development is needed at every stage of education. In counselling it is important not to overwhelm a client linguistically. Often he may not be able to verbalise his feelings; the counsellor must depend a great deal on non-verbal communication, and attempt to clarify by expressing in simple terms what he senses the client is trying to say.

At any time the scores of tests of ability/personality, etc., should be regarded

with healthy scepticism: when used in counselling the disadvantaged this is doubly important. To my mind they should not be contemplated, if at all, until a sound rapport has been established between the counsellor and client; at that stage they may help to convince a student of the strengths he has, in addition to helping the counsellor to reach a true assessment.

Frequently the disadvantaged student is faced with the problem that the implications are that his education and vocational path may set him at variance with the norms of his home and social environment. There are many ramifications here which must be constantly at the forefront of the counsellor's mind in his discussions with the student.

The counsellor has to make some assessment of the needs of the student, which may be, for example, for psychotherapy, for supportive counselling, or for practical help. The disadvantaged often need sheer practical assistance, down-to-earth facts and information, and guidance in learning how to think logically and arrive at sound decisions.

translating the principles of guidance and counselling into practical terms

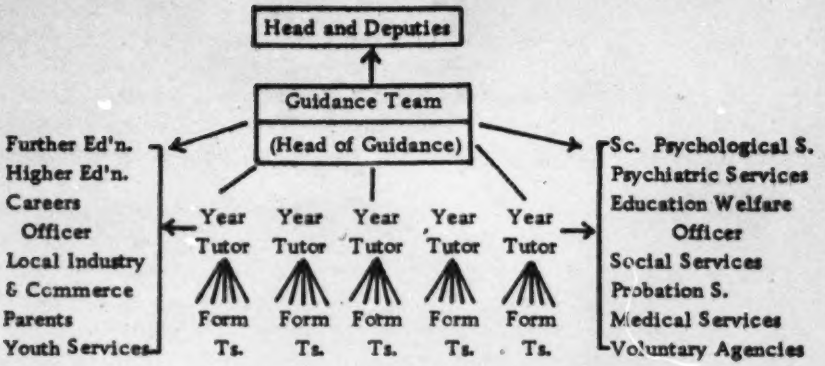
In his address to the 1972 Conference of Guidance Peter Daws said: ".. if one is concerned with the developmental needs of all children the logical and economical place to start is not in one-to-one counselling, but in the classrooms with programmes of sex education, personal relationships, social education, moral education, careers education and decision-making and so on". For these reasons, for the reasons given above, and most important because initially some students, particularly the disadvantaged may not be ready for the one to one counselling situation, the principles of counselling and guidance must be translated into practical terms in the procedure of the school and its curriculum content. This of course also means that all members of the staff are involved in some way in the guidance provisions of the school.

aspects of guidance

The following components are I believe necessary for a sound guidance structure:

1. The principles are implicit in the ethos of the school
2. There is a Department of Guidance
3. Guidance in the curriculum -
   (a) integration at points of relevance, with other subject disciplines) for
   (b) a systematic programme of guidance contained within a guidance syllabus) all students
4. Opportunity for individual guidance and counselling
   (a) with Year Tutor - all students
   (b) with School Counsellor - some students
   (c) involvement of group tutor or teacher in group guidance - all students
5. Time - on the time-table
   - for individual interviews and counselling

structure of guidance and pastoral care



The Guidance Team is responsible for guidance work on the timetable, for interviewing individual students and for facilitating the guidance function of the form teachers. Within the team there may be particular specialisms - eg. Careers Information, Counselling, etc.

The Form Teachers have an involvement both in the educative aspects of Guidance and in their relationship vis-a-vis the individual students in their groups.

the guidance syllabus

This is in two sections: One for use by specialist staff, in time-tabled periods. The second for use by form teachers in form time.

Since guidance is a developmental process, there are certain topics which are common to all students; the depth and extent of study will vary according to the age and maturity, viz:

> Techniques of studying and learning; self and social awareness; decision making: value judgement; health education; education in personal relationships; leisure time; educational and vocational information.

Within the framework of each school year these may be briefly categorised as follows:-

First and Second Years	Third Years
Induction to School	Attitudes to school and learning
Expectations of students	Decision making; 13+ choices
Excursion/Experience Check list	World of Commerce to meet Human Need
Learning	Use of Careers library; job study
Play	Personality vis-a-vis careers
Healthy Habits	Common concerns
Growth and Development	Aims in life
Getting on with Others	School government

Fourth Years	Fifth Years
(Ingathering of Information)	(Culmination of Previous year - Decisions)
Getting the most out of studying	
What do I want from Work: Life?	Choices at 16+
What can I offer?	Careers at 16+
What's going?	Personal Autobiography and Plan
How do I get there?	Rubrics of obtaining a job/HE
Job Analysis	Aspects of the Working World (ie. Pay, Safety, Colleagues, etc.)
Self Analysis	Maturity in Relationships
Spending Leisure	The Age of Responsibility
Money	Out and about
Community and Social Problems	
Health education	

integration

Some aspects of the guidance programme obviously integrate with other disciplines. There are a number of experiences and excursions which are valuable to educational and personal development. If a check list is given early in secondary school opportunity compensation for deficiencies may be built into the curriculum.

variety of courses and awards

In the school there is a need for as wide a variety of courses and means of recognition as possible, esteem being given to many aspects of school life, not exclusively to high academic skill. There needs to be the opportunity for everyone to gain some worthwhile certificate. All students should have the chance to take English and numeracy examinations, using diminished gradings where appropriate. CSE course in Combined Sciences and Humanities, and carrying a larger practical element are necessary. Recognition of awards in First Aid, Civil Defence, Safety, Child Care, can be given. A Leaving Certificate should be wider than the traditional subject merits and include, for example, 'Preparation for a Career', 'Games and Outdoor Pursuits', 'Service to School and Community', 'Punctuality'.

link courses

Quite apart from the vocational element, there is invaluable benefit from the experience of moving out of the school setting into an adult centre of learning. This in itself often helps to motivate and mature the most incalcitrant of students. There is more likelihood of a successful transference to Day Release or full-time course upon leaving school. It helps students to become more realistically aware of what type of work is involved in a particular career. There is scope for much more extensive development of the CSE course devised and conducted by consultation between school and Further Education.

work experience

Work experience may be similarly enriching, especially as an education in personal relationships, and as a factor inducing motivation to learn. The potential exists for the development of schemes based on the triad of school, Further Education and Industry which could be to the mutual benefit of all concerned.

personal and social relationships

Education in personal and social relationships in the last year at school only, is analagous to crisis counselling. As with vocational education, this requires a developmental approach. In the counselling session the individual student's particular difficulties may be dealt with; much can be taught in the group

guidance lessons, but practice is better than precept. A great deal will be learned from the social behaviour of staff to staff and staff to students and from the operation of the school council. Gradually over five years the school programme needs to be extending the social experiences of the students. What is most important throughout is the need for planning, so that students may be in no doubt as to what will be expected of them, and for follow-up, to restore any failing confidence.

opportunities within FE

In all these respects it seems to me that the College of Further Education has a unique opportunity which the school does not have. By the time students arrive at FE, the reality has dawned that the world beyond school is not Utopia. This can be a turning point for some young people, when for the first time there is a motivation which successfully harnessed can be 'the making' of some of them.

Two recent social developments may be mentioned here: Community Industry Schemes and the suggestions for the introduction of Supervision and Control Orders under the Probation Service. In regard to the former, already there is an awareness of the need to develop the programme further in the fields of training skills and counselling in social adjustment. Concerning the latter, the Advisory Council on the Penal System states: "They (Young adult offenders) may be failures of the school system or immature in other respects and the few years after leaving school may offer a last chance to help them make good the ground they have lost. Special emphasis should be put on education and training".

There are several obvious areas to be covered in this respect -

(a) Identifying and developing vocational skills and aptitudes
(b) The opportunity to see the approach to literacy and numeracy in a new light
(c) Factual careers information and vocational counselling
(d) The development of social skills for successful relationships with working colleagues
(e) The opportunity for self-appraisal and determination of one's life style
(f) Skills in making decisions and value judgements
(g) Consideration of moral and social issues
(h) Opportunities for satisfying leisure pursuits

Ground roots guidance and counselling are essential in the secondary school, extending through into Colleges of Further Education. In both there needs to be the dual provision of counselling expertise for individual students and back-up resources for the guidance and counselling function of the staff as a whole."

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COMPULSORY PART-TIME EDUCATION IN WEST GERMANY

Mr Merritt spoke briefly to the case study* that he and Mr Yates, Director of Coombe Lodge, had produced on compulsory day release in West Germany. The final section of that case study is produced below, followed by that part of the discussion on day release that related to the British system.

what lesson can we in Britain learn?

The reservations about extending compulsory part-time education in Britain were, briefly, cost, and possible opposition from students, employers, parents and educationalists. There was little sign in Germany of opposition to the law which had operated for 50 years. In spite of vigorous opposition and forebodings in '47 over raising the school-leaving age to 15, there would be little support now for returning to 14 and this is no longer an issue with any of the groups mentioned. Raising the age to 16 is much more recent and some teachers in schools are complaining of their difficulties. Parents and employers seem to have accepted the new law but, in some areas, pupils are resisting and truancy is considerable. There is, however, reason to believe that, in a few years, 1972 will have gone down in the history of education as a step forward to join '47, 1918 (raised to 14) and 1893 (raised to 11).

FE colleges in Britain already have valuable experience in planning day release and block release. Although there has been no legal sanction to enforce attendance, the requirement of an employer seems very similar to a young worker. Many of these students follow recognised courses in our colleges but thousands of others have attended at the wish of their employer for continued general education, and the staff in many colleges have responded to the challenge to interest and educate. Only the unwillingness of successive governments to implement the 1944 Act gradually eroded this general release.

Many of our FE colleges have no experience of part-time release for continued general education, and would find it difficult. Two points should be noted. If continued part-time education became compulsory it would not necessarily be for general education, Employers have made it clear that they would much prefer a strong vocational element, and the first effect might be merely to increase the numbers attending existing technician and operatives' courses. There might well be an increased demand for block release rather than day release, especially in rural areas.

For the new part-time student whose employers identified no desirable vocational course, teachers would be challenged to plan an educational experience of

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* For more detail, see this case study in Vol 4 of Coombe Lodge College Management Handbooks.

relevance for young adults. This would need advance preparation on a considerable scale.

Nevertheless, it seems clear that the DES and successive Secretaries of State do not relish any further compulsion over education; many administrators forecast widespread hostility and resistance. In reply to the comment that this does not appear to happen in Germany, they retort 'Well, they're Germans and we're British'. It is difficult to argue about this - as with the belief that only foreigners could cope with the metric system!

The reluctance to implement Parliament's decisions of 1918 and 1944 must surely be mainly financial. It is thus a matter of priorities: whether we rank this development as more or less important than raising the school-leaving age (Crowther in 1959) or than higher education development, or even colour television for all or the Channel Tunnel. We must therefore make a political decision for a reform in Britain, long promised to ourselves but in existence for 50 years in Germany."

Discussion Arising

Mr Merritt noted that in comparing West Germany and British attitudes to compulsory day release, one ought to recognise that the German youth had 2 years less compulsory school education. Further, he believed that W. Germany experienced similar difficulties to Britain over literacy (though, obviously, the Germans were not willing to discuss this). One advantage of the German system was that the course content was worked out by the local Chamber of Commerce rather than, as in Britain, by educationalists (whom the employers distrusted) or the City & Guilds Institute who suffered through being a national body (however flexible their schemes in practice, local business would support a national syllabus).

He agreed that German values differed from the British significantly in their attitude to industry. They tended to hold it in high esteem while the British attitude was to value more highly the academic and pure scientist. With this attitude permeating their educational system, Germans were no less cultured than ourselves (with the higher emphasis in our schools on culture rather than work): thus it would seem that the British system of education could learn from the German. Another conference member, too, suggested that our system needed changing. Essentially, it was a highly selective system, and it would require a fairly radical re-thinking of educational philosophy as practiced by both schools and colleges, to give status or a sense of worth to almost everyone for what they did and have taken effort over.

Whenever any changes were suggested, (eg. CSE) there was always a loud outcry about lowering standards and 'more means worse'. Mr Merritt agreed that 'worth' or value was very important. In Germany the apprenticeships and the work done on them were valued highly by both the students and society at large. We did not have the same attitude here - although we all knew how important job motivation was.

Mr Merritt stated that while he was convinced that compulsory day release was the answer - compulsion made it easy to avoid working out priorities - his visit to Germany had brought home to him precisely how much women were deprived in this country: in Germany as many girls as boys were involved in industrial training. A member commented that to push women into more training was tackling the problem the wrong way round. No-one should demand compulsory day release before courses appropriate to particular jobs and occupations had been prepared. Finally, a member suggested that, since Britain lacked employer interest in day release or industrial education, could we not use the unions? Or, rather, should not the unions in Britain be taking the kind of interest their counterparts on the continent expressed? This would help solve the problems over lack of industrial training given to women.

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NATIONAL BUREAU FOR HANDICAPPED STUDENTS

This statement, proposing a National Bureau for Disabled Students, was prepared by a working group under Mr. Coe's leadership.

Following a National Conference in 1973 on the disabled student in Higher Education, a Steering Group was established to draw up proposals which would co-ordinate and extend the work being done for disabled students.

The Steering Group has now completed its work and will shortly be putting forward a proposal to establish a National Bureau for Handicapped Students in Tertiary Education.

The Bureau will have the following aims:

i) To act as an information centre for the work being done for the handicapped by institutions in tertiary education as well as by governmental agencies and voluntary bodies.

ii) To help in co-ordinating, where appropriate, the work of particular institutions which are dealing with various aspects of handicap and promoting good practice.

iii) To offer a service capable of providing or arranging specialist advice on the handicapped for educational institutions or for individuals requiring such help.

iv) To investigate and develop co-ordinating services in the field of careers guidance and placement and to promote the extension of these services, additionally widening the range of new employment opportunities.

v) To initiate research projects in the field of handicap with special reference to education and employment.

It is not intended that the Bureau will replace work being done by local authorities, government agencies or others in the various fields mentioned above; it will work in close harmony and co-operation with such bodies in carrying out its aims.

It is important that the Bureau should have the benefit of first-hand knowledge of a range of handicaps. It is therefore anticipated that both on the staff of the Bureau and on its Governing Body there will be a number of handicapped people.

Membership of the Bureau will be open to institutions, organisations and individuals who are interested in the work of the Bureau. Affiliation to the Bureau will be on either an institutional or individual basis and affiliated members will receive the Annual Report and details of other papers produced by the Bureau

as well as being eligible to attend the Annual Meeting.

The Bureau will be headed by a Director who will be assisted by two Deputy Directors and Section Heads each with particular spheres of responsibilities, such as information, publicity, research, employment and vocational guidance, consultancy and field work.

The control of the Bureau will be in the hands of a Governing Council and an Executive. The Bureau will be located in London, but thought will be given to extending its work to centres in other major industrial areas such as Manchester, Glasgow and Cardiff.

The Steering Group believes that such a National Bureau would enable handicapped people to develop their abilities to the full through further and higher education and to enjoy employment commensurate with their skills, abilities and desires, thereby gaining their independence and contributing to the life of the community.

PROJECT To discuss the lectures and workshops, review the provision, and make recommendations for the future

T I Russell, Staff Tutor, Coombe Lodge

Introduction to the Project:-

"The interest in education for the whole 16-19 age group is growing and developing and, as the proportion of this age group in full-time FE is increasing, that in part-time education is diminishing: with the progress there is regression. It is against this background that we are to explore provision for the less-able student. There seem to me to be seven organisational areas implicit.

Firstly, who are we concerned with? While there are two major orientations on this matter within the conference room, and all present are concerned to improve the service offered. (A) We are all aware that between 50 and 60% of this age group receive no help at present from any sub-section of the education system. We are concerned to expand this service, and in this sense we are concerned with those students we didn't have 8 or 10 years ago. We have the problem of the unknown. (B) Of course, it is easy to identify specific groups which at present are allocated too little because - with perhaps the exception of illiterates - they are already located somewhere in the system. There is, too, that large, other group - those who are not getting any education after 16. These have always been a concern of FE, especially since the Industrial Training Act and the establishment of ITBs has not stemmed the falling numbers in part-time education.

The Queen's speech indicated that the government have 4 interests in education, 2 of which are in our area. It is possible that the government might do something dangerous like implementing the 1918 Act - which would mean ROSLA all over again, and many FE teachers are just not interested - or create common regulations for the 16-19 group (which might be less costly than implementing the 1918 Act).

The second area is resource acquisition and, by extension, resource priorities. If you want to improve the service you are likely to need more resources. Here the Labour Party proposals, especially for the handicapped, could prove good propaganda weapons. We need first, however, to work out how to publicise, to make the public aware of the need for resources, and then our priorities within the total problem.

Thirdly, there is the matter of mobilizing the interest, enthusiasm and expertise of the teaching force in schools and colleges and, as a subset of this, the problem of the use of specialists. Who should do this kind of work? Within any area there is the temptation to say "What we need is more specialists". Certainly work in this area does require trained staff - and, equally important but more frequently forgotten - more time allocated - but how do we get the specialists

to help the non-specialists? How do they relate, and what should be the relationship of the specialists to the overall institution?

Fourthly, there is the question of curriculum. What do we want to offer the less-able - or, put another way, what kind of course content will they find meaningful and relevant?

Fifthly, communication. What kind of communication channels should there be between institutions - schools and colleges - and industry at both local and national levels? How can we maximise the information flow between the educational institutions and the receiving organisations?

Six, the specialisation of institutions. Most questions here are obvious, but one perhaps less obvious is "Are schools able to work only with full-time students?" Perhaps organisations could co-operate as well as specialise so we must ask "What can we do to alleviate the worst effects of the traditional school/college split?"

Finally, how does all this relate to the student? How do we help the students at the immediate and personal level? How do we guide, select and motivate him to take the courses that will be of use to him? This leads on to the problems of placement. Hopefully, the courses will have helped them become better citizens, employees, and this should be demonstrated in our ability to place them in industry.

Most of these questions are practical - how we get things done in the next 5 to 10 years. We should not get immersed in the ideological issues, nor focus our attention on the national level alone. While we should not ignore this aspect, and local efforts will be enormously helped by positive governmental policies, it is the local initiatives that will improve the education we provide for the less-able."

Syndicate Findings

While recognising that the education service should do more for those 16-19 year olds who were physically or mentally disadvantaged, the syndicates preferred to confine their discussions and recommendations to the under-achievers, the academically least-able, and - mainly - to those already in schools and colleges. One syndicate defined these as those below CSE grades 3/4.

resources

All syndicates recognised the need for greater financial provision for the group under consideration, though certain of the members felt strongly that a great deal more could be done through reallocation of resources between the parts of the education system and, moreover, reform of the points system/Burnham grading so that the salary structure was modified to end discrimination between high and low level work in FE. There should be governmental (ie. at the highest level) reallocation of priorities to spend as least as much on the under-achievers rather than, as at present, the vast majority of resources for the 16-19 age group being devoted to the most able who had the least need. Staffing ratios should be improved, and possibly voluntary labour - interested parents or other skilled adults - could also be employed.

mobilizing interest of teaching force

It was felt, too, that modification of the grading system in favour of work with under-achievers would increase the interest of all teachers in this work: staff tended to reflect the implicit as well as explicit aims of their institutions and of the overall system. The status of Remedial Education departments and staff concerned should be enhanced. Greater publicity of successful experiments - such as those mentioned on the conference - would also help increase the involvement of the teaching force. Teacher training courses should put much greater emphasis on the teaching of the less-able; Diploma and Certificate courses should have a 'less-able' option, and in-service training be developed to improve the ability of all teachers to cope with the special needs (especially illiteracy) of this group.

curricula

The syndicates felt that many of the suggestions for appropriate curricula were equally pertinent to <u>all</u> in this age group. One syndicate suggested that, if FE had 50% representation on the relevant Committee, a Schools' Council Project on the 16-19 slow learner should be introduced to complement the one in preparation for the 11-16 slow learner. All syndicates argued for more relevant and realistic courses, and one in particular catalogued possibilities:

(a) 'drop in' courses on a 12 month cycle;
(b) open-access workshops that were based on the students' own leisure and personal interests;
(c) short courses;

(d) FE associated with community industries;
(e) continuance of CSE courses;
(f) C & G 150 courses; and
(g) pre-TOPS courses (see paper by R C Aldridge. Ed.) with a lower age limit.

Much greater emphasis should be placed on communication skills as these are considered essential to the students' progress in all spheres of their lives.

communications between institutions

There was complete unanimity over the "urgent need for a more systematic and rigorous development of links between secondary schools and FE colleges - for both the able and the less-able student". One mechanism could be 'introduction days': another was the expansion of the system of link courses that were already in existence. The LEAs could act as frameworks within which formal and informal contacts could take place, and local authority advisers had a crucial role in bridging the gulf between the two parts of the education system. Further, the secondary and tertiary institutions should, together with the Careers Service, plan a comprehensive service to provide information, opportunities and pre-vocational experience for this age group (and not merely the under-achievers). Such a service should pay particular attention to student motivation.

motivation

On the question of the motivation of the individual student, one syndicate suggested that the principle factors in the rejection of education by the majority of 16+ year olds were: dislike of institutions, their rejection by the institutions, irrelevant courses, and the extreme examination-orientation of both schools and colleges. Another syndicate recognised that there was no easy answer to the problem of encouraging students to continue their education, but thought the following measures should be considered:-

(a) payment to 16+ students for attending college or school;
(b) improved and more attractive courses, which might result from greater exchange of information between schools and colleges. A Board of Studies formed from the staff of both institutions could organise the courses to facilitate social and emotional development (especially over personal relationships and leisure) and avoid the monotonous repetition of work already covered in schools;
(c) compulsory education at 16+ (though there was disagreement on the principle and practicalities of any such system);
(d) much greater liaison with and use of outside agencies such as the Youth Service;
(e) a genuine effort to set up a system of guidance and counselling which concentrates on the individual's needs - possibly a continuation of the services already existing in some schools;
(f) continual emphasis on the teaching of communication skills; and
(g) the development of pre-TOPS training

While the conference as a whole had approved of various of the above suggestions for a curricula for the less-able, this one syndicate had considered that they would have the additional - and very necessary advantage of increasing student motivation.

Another syndicate gave the following analysis of the situation. The present public pressure for full-time and other courses will increase, thus resources must be made available if an explosive and economic situation is to be avoided. It is cheaper to deal with this situation within the education and social services. A full-time equivalent voucher system, chasable at any time, should be introduced and, in the context of the likelihood of increasing unemployment (from both the movements of international finance and the steady loss of jobs to machines), labour-intensive industrial and agricultural companies could be set up as part of the social services to provide some return on social security payments.

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